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LOVEL THE WIDOWER  
AND  
OTHER STORIES AND SKETCHES



# LOVEL THE WIDOWER

AND

## OTHER STORIES & SKETCHES

BY  
WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

*With Illustrations by the Author, George Cruikshank, and  
Kenny Meadows*

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## NOTE.

### LOVEL THE WIDOWER.

WHEN Thackeray undertook the editorship of *The Cornhill Magazine*, it was expected that the first number would contain an instalment of a great novel from his pen. *The Virginians* had only been finished two or three months, however, and the author, being far from well, thought the full weight of editorial responsibility would be about as much as he could sustain. So Anthony Trollope was commissioned to write, as the *pièce de résistance*, a novel in which at least one clergyman should figure prominently—the result was the delightful *Framley Parsonage*—and the editor contented himself with the second place.

If Thackeray had fulfilled expectations, it is not difficult to imagine what his contribution would have been. For some time past paragraphs had been appearing in different papers stating that ‘the author of *Esmond* and the *Essays on the Humourists*, who had hitherto delighted in the times of elaborate flowing wigs, and swords, and coats with huge lapels, had suddenly betaken himself to the misty days of savage names and scanty clothing.’ This rumour was founded upon a certain substratum of truth. ‘I intend to write a novel of the time of Henry V.,’ he had written in May, 1858, to Motley, the American historian, ‘which will be my *capo d’opera*, in which the ancestors of my present characters, Warringtons, Pendennises, and the rest, shall be introduced. It will be a most magnificent performance and nobody will read it.’ It is needless to say this intention was never fulfilled.

It is generally believed that in the account of Mr. Batchelor’s purchase of *The Museum* newspaper, Thackeray was embodying his own experience of a similar venture into which he had been led by a plausible acquaintance. The name of that weekly paper was *The National Standard and Journal of Literature, Science, Music, Theatricals, and the Fine Arts*, which appeared on January 5, 1833, under the editorship of F. W. N. (‘Alphabet’)

Bayley. Thackeray soon became a contributor, with the nineteenth number took over the editorship, and some weeks later purchased the paper. The last number appeared on February 1, 1834.

*Lovel the Widower* was founded upon a play written by Thackeray entitled *The Wolves and the Lamb* (which will be printed in a later volume of this edition). The story, with Illustrations by the Author, appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine* from January to June, 1860, and in the following year appeared in book form. The title-page ran :

Lovel the Widower. | By | W. M. Thackeray. | With Illustrations. | London : | Smith, Elder, and Co., 65 Cornhill. | MDCCCLXI. | [The Right of Translation is Reserved.]

It was subsequently reprinted in the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxi.: *Denis Duval, Lovel the Widower, etc.*, 1869).

## SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF MAJOR GAHAGAN

appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine* (February, March, November, December, 1838; February, 1839). The first instalment was headed *Some Passages in the Life of Major Gahagan*; the second, *Historical Recollections. By Major Gahagan*; and the third, fourth, and fifth, *Major Gahagan's Historical Reminiscences*.

If, at the time of its appearance, *Major Gahagan* did not greatly enhance Thackeray's reputation in England, at least it was appreciated abroad. 'I have been delighted to find that the authors of the two best periodical series of papers that have appeared for twenty years are one and the same person,' Mr. N. P. Willis, the astute editor of *The Corsair* (New York), wrote in 1839. 'One of my first enquiries in London was touching the authorship of *The Yellowplush Papers*, next *The Reminiscences of Major Gahagan*—the only things in periodical literature, except *The Pickwick Papers*, for which I looked with any interest or eagerness.' Mr. N. P. Willis at once secured the services of Thackeray, who contributed to *The Corsair* several papers under the general heading of *Letters from London, Paris, Pekin, Petersburg, etc. By the author of 'The Yellowplush Correspondence,' the 'Memoirs of Major Gahagan,' etc.* Readers of the *Note* prefixed to volume xi. of this edition (*The Yellowplush Correspondence, etc.*) will remember that the writings of the erudite footman were already familiar to Americans.

The burlesque was reprinted, under the original title, in *Comic*

*Tales and Sketches* (1841), with four full-page Illustrations by the Author, specially drawn for that edition. It was subsequently reprinted in *The Confessions of Fitz-Boodle and Some Passages in the Life of Major Gahagan* (New York, 1853); and, under the title of *The Tremendous Adventures of Major Gahagan*, in *Miscellanies* (vol. i., 1856); in the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xvi.: *Burlesques, etc.*, 1869); and also in *Miscellanies* (Boston; vol. i., 1869).

None of these editions contain the Illustrations from *Comic Tales and Sketches*, which are now for the first time reprinted.

### CHARACTER SKETCHES.

(i.) *Captain Rook and Mr. Pigeon* appeared in *The Corsair* (New York, September 28, 1839). The full title ran: *Letters from London, Paris, Pekin, Petersburg, etc. By the Author of 'The Yellowplush Papers,' the 'Memoirs of Major Gahagan,' etc. — Captain Rook and Mr. Pigeon.* The sketch was signed 'T. T.'

It was reprinted, with two Illustrations by Kenny Meadows, in *Heads of the People; or, Portraits of the English. Drawn by Kenny Meadows. With Original Essays by Distinguished Authors.* London: Robert Tyas, 1840 (pp. 305-320).

(ii.) *The Fashionable Authoress.* By William Thackeray, with an Illustration by Kenny Meadows; and

(iii.) *The Artists.* By Michael Angelo Titmarsh, with two illustrations by Kenny Meadows, appeared in *Heads of the People; or, Portraits of the English. Drawn by Kenny Meadows. With Original Essays by Distinguished Authors.* London: Robert Tyas, 1841 (pp. 73-84 and pp. 161-176 respectively).

The three sketches, without the Illustrations, were reprinted in *Miscellanies* (vol. ii.: *Character Sketches*, 1856); *Miscellanies* (Boston; vol. iii., 1869); and in the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xv.: *The Book of Snobs . . . Character Sketches*, 1869).

The Illustrations by Kenny Meadows are now for the first time reprinted.

### THE PROFESSOR.

*The Professor. A Tale.* By Goliath Gahagan, appeared in *Bentley's Miscellany*, July, 1837. It was reprinted in *Comic Tales and Sketches* (vol. ii., 1841), with an Illustration specially

drawn for that edition by the Author ; without the Illustration, in *A Shabby Genteel Story, and Other Tales* (New York, 1853) ; and in a supplementary volume of the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxiii. : *Miscellaneous Essays, etc.*, 1885).

The Illustration from *Comic Tales and Sketches* is now for the first time reprinted.

## THE BEDFORD ROW CONSPIRACY.

This is avowedly founded upon a story by Charles de Bernard, a French author of some note in his day, whose works were reviewed by Thackeray in a paper *On Some French Fashionable Novels*, which was printed in *The Paris Sketch Book* (1840).

*The Bedford Row Conspiracy* appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, January, March, April, 1840. It was reprinted in *Comic Tales and Sketches* (vol. ii., 1841), with an Illustration specially drawn for that edition by the Author ; without the Illustration, in *A Shabby Genteel Story, and Other Tales* (New York, 1853) ; *Miscellanies* (vol. iii. : *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, etc.*, 1856) ; and in the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxi. : *Denis Duval . . . and Other Stories*, 1869) ; and also in *Miscellanies* (Boston ; vol. iii., 1869).

The Illustration from *Comic Tales and Sketches* is now for the first time reprinted.

## READING A POEM.

This little play, under the title of *Loose Sketches*. By Michael Angelo Titmarsh.—*Reading a Poem*, appeared in *The Britannia*, May 18, 1841. It was discovered by Mr. C. P. Johnson, who reprinted it, with an Illustration by Mr. W. D. Almond, R.B.A., as No. xxvii. of the privately printed opuscula issued to members of 'The Sette of Odd Volumes.' The title-page ran :

Reading a Poem. | By | Wm. Makepeace Thackeray. | Communicated by Brother Charles Plumptre Johnson | to the Sette at a Meeting holden at | Limner's Hotel, on Friday the | 1st of May, 1891). Imprinted at | the Chiswick Press | Took's Court | Chancery Lane, London, MDCCCXLI.

It was subsequently reprinted in *Loose Sketches, etc.* (1894), and in the Biographical edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xiii. : *Ballads . . . Tales*, 1899).



## ROLANDSECK.

This story appeared, under the title of *Loose Sketches*. By *Michael Angelo Titmarsh*.—*Rolandseck*, in *The Britannia*, June 19, 1841. It was reprinted in *Loose Sketches, etc.* (1894).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## LITTLE SPITZ.

*Little Spitz. A Lenten Anecdote from the German of Professor Spass*. By *Michael Angelo Titmarsh*, appeared in George Cruikshank's *Omnibus*, October, 1841 (pp. 167-72), with an Illustration by the Artist. It was reprinted, without the Illustration, in *Sultan Stork, etc.*, by Mr. R. H. Shepherd (1887), and, with the Illustration, in Thackeray's *Stray Papers* by Mr. Lewis Melville (1901).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## SULTAN STORK.

*Sultan Stork ; being the One Thousand and Second Night*. By *Major G. O'G. Gahagan, H.E.I.C.S.*, appeared, with Illustrations by George Cruikshank, in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, February and May, 1842. It was reprinted, without the Illustrations, in *Sultan Stork, etc.*, by Mr. R. H. Shepherd (1887), and in the Pocket edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xviii. : *The Book of Snobs and other Papers*, 1892).

The Illustrations by George Cruikshank are now for the first time reprinted.

## BLUEBEARD'S GHOST.

*Bluebeard's Ghost*. By *M. A. Titmarsh*, appeared in *Fraser's Magazine*, October, 1843. It was reprinted in *Early and Late Papers* by Mr. J. T. Fields (Boston, 1867) ; *Miscellanies* (Boston ; vol. v., 1870) ; and in a supplementary volume of the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxv. : *Miscellaneous Essays, etc.*, 1885).

## THE PARTIE FINE.

*The Partie Fine.* By Launcelot Wagstaff, appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, May, 1844. It was reprinted in *Sultan Stork, etc.*, by Mr. R. H. Shepherd (1887); in Thackeray's *Stray Papers* by Mr. Lewis Melville (1901).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## ARABELLA.

*Arabella; or, The Moral of 'The Partie Fine.'* By Titmarsh, appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1844. It was reprinted in *Sultan Stork, etc.*, by Mr. R. H. Shepherd (1887); and in Thackeray's *Stray Papers* by Mr. Lewis Melville (1901).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## GREENWICH—WHITEBAIT.

*Greenwich—Whitebait.* By Mr. Wagstaff, appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, July, 1844. It was reprinted in a supplementary volume of the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxiii.: *Miscellaneous Essays, etc.*, 1885).

## THE CHEST OF CIGARS.

*The Chest of Cigars.* By Launcelot Wagstaff, Esq., appeared in *The Monthly Magazine*, July, 1845. It was reprinted in Thackeray's *Stray Papers* by Mr. Lewis Melville (1901).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## BOB ROBINSON'S FIRST LOVE.

*Bob Robinson's First Love.* By Launcelot Wagstaff, Esq., appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, August, 1845. It was reprinted in Thackeray's *Stray Papers* by Mr. Lewis Melville (1901).

It is now for the first time included in an edition of Thackeray's Works.

## AN INTERESTING EVENT—VOLTIGEUR.

*An Interesting Event.* By Mr. Titmarsh, appeared in *The Keepsake* for 1849. Thackeray did not approve of *The Keepsake* kind of production, and he made terrific onslaughts on the worst specimen in some of his early contributions to *Fraser's Magazine* (see *A Word on the Annuals*, *The Annuals*, and other articles in vol. xii. of this edition : *Critical Papers in Literature*). Lady Blessington, however, was a friend ; and he was anxious to assist her. He remained true until the end. The French valet of the Countess wrote to her from Gore House after the sale in 1849 : '*M. Thackeray est venu aussi ; il avait les larmes aux yeux en partant. C'est peut-être la seule personne que j'aie vu réellement affectée à votre départ.*' After her death the annual was edited by her niece, Miss Marguerite Power, who, for auld lang syne, was supported by several of the Gore House set, including Thackeray, who contributed *Voltigeur* (1851), *The Pen and the Album* (1853), and *Lucy's Birthday* (1854). The last two items are reprinted in vol. xviii. of this edition : *Ballads and Verses*.

It was for Lady Blessington, when she sent him an album-print of a boy and girl fishing, with a request he would make some verses for it, that Thackeray wrote *Piscator and Piscatrix*. 'I liked the idea, and set about it at once,' he told Mr. Locker-Lampson. 'I was two entire days at it—and was so occupied with it, so engrossed by it, that I did not shave during the whole time.'

## A LEAF OUT OF A SKETCH-BOOK.

This sketch, with two Illustrations by the Author, appeared in *The Victoria Regia*, A Volume of Original Contributions in Poetry and Prose (1861, pp. 118-125), edited by Miss Adelaide A. Procter, another of Thackeray's old friends. It was reprinted, without the Illustrations, in *Early and Late Papers* by Mr. J. T. Fields (Boston, 1867), and with the Illustrations in a supplementary volume of the Library edition of Thackeray's Works (vol. xxiii. : *Miscellaneous Essays, etc.*, 1885).

L. M.





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LOVEL THE WIDOWER





## CHAPTER I.

### THE BACHELOR OF BEAK STREET.



HO shall be the hero of this tale? Not I who write it. I am but the Chorus of the Play. I make remarks on the conduct of the characters: I narrate their simple story. There is love and marriage in it: there is grief and disappointment: the scene is in the parlour, and the region beneath the parlour. No: it may be the parlour and kitchen, in this instance, are on the same level. There is no high life, unless, to be sure, you call a baronet's widow a lady in high life; and some ladies may be, while some certainly are not. I don't think there's a villain

in the whole performance. There is an abominable selfish old woman, certainly; an old highway robber; an old sponger on other people's kindness; an old hunter of Bath and Cheltenham boarding-houses (about which how can I know anything, never having been in a boarding-house at Bath or Cheltenham in my life?); an old swindler of tradesmen, tyrant of servants, bully of the poor—who, to be sure, might do duty for a villain, but she considers herself as virtuous a woman as ever was born. The heroine is not faultless (ah! that will be a great relief to some folks, for many writers' good women are, you know, so *very*

insipid). The principal personage you may very likely think to be no better than a muff. But is many a respectable man of our acquaintance much better? and do muffs know that they are what they are, or, knowing it, are they unhappy? Do girls decline to marry one if he is rich? Do we refuse to dine with one? I listened to one at Church last Sunday, with all the women crying and sobbing; and, oh, dear me! how finely he preached! Don't we give him great credit for wisdom and eloquence in the House of Commons? Don't we give him important commands in the army? Can you, or can you not, point out one who has been made a peer? Doesn't your wife call one in the moment any of the children are ill? Don't we read his dear poems, or even novels? Yes; perhaps even this one is read and written by—— Well? *Quid rides?* Do you mean that I am painting a portrait which hangs before me every morning in the looking-glass when I am shaving? *Après?* Do you suppose that I suppose that I have not infirmities like my neighbours? Am I weak? It is notorious to all my friends there is a certain dish I can't resist; no, not if I have already eaten twice too much at dinner. So, dear sir, or madam, have *you* your weakness—*your* irresistible dish of temptation? (or if you don't know it, your friends do). No, dear friend, the chances are that you and I are not people of the highest intellect, of the largest fortune, of the most ancient family, of the most consummate virtue, of the most faultless beauty in face and figure. We are no heroes nor angels; neither are we fiends from abodes unmentionable; black assassins, treacherous Iagos, familiar with stabbing and poison—murder our amusement, daggers our playthings, arsenic our daily bread, lies our conversation, and forgery our common handwriting. No, we are not monsters of crime, or angels walking the earth—at least I know *one* of us who isn't, as can be shown any day at home if the knife won't cut or the mutton comes up raw. But we are not altogether brutal and unkind, and a few folks like us. Our poetry is not as good as Alfred Tennyson's, but we can turn a couplet for Miss Fanny's album: our jokes are not always first-rate, but Mary and her mother smile very kindly when papa tells his story or makes his pun. We have many weaknesses, but we are not ruffians of crime. No more was my friend Lovel. On the contrary, he was as harmless and kindly a fellow as ever lived when I first knew him. At present, with his changed position, he is, perhaps, rather *fine* (and certainly I am not asked to his *best* dinner-parties as I used to be, where you hardly see a commoner—but stay! I am advancing matters). At the time when this story begins, I say, Lovel had his faults—which of us has not? He had buried

his wife, having notoriously been henpecked by her. How many men and brethren are like him! He had a good fortune—I wish I had as much—though I daresay many people are ten times as rich. He was a good-looking fellow enough; though that depends, ladies, upon whether you like a fair man or a dark one. He had a country house, but it was only at Putney. In fact, he was in business in the city, and being a hospitable man, and having three or four spare bedrooms, some of his friends were always welcome at Shrublands, especially after Mrs. Lovel's death, who liked me pretty well at the period of her early marriage with my friend, but got to dislike me at last and to show me the cold shoulder. That is a joint I never could like (though I have known fellows who persist in dining off it year after year, who cling hold of it, and refuse to be separated from it). I say, when Lovel's wife began to show me that she was tired of my company, I made myself scarce; used to pretend to be engaged when Fred faintly asked me to Shrublands; to accept his meek apologies, proposals to dine *en garçon* at Greenwich, the club, and so forth; and never visit upon him my wrath at his wife's indifference—for, after all, he had been my friend at many a pinch: he never stinted at Hart's or Lovegrove's, and always made a point of having the wine I liked, never mind what the price was. As for his wife, there was, assuredly, no love lost between us—I thought her a lean, scraggy, lackadaisical, egotistical, consequential, insipid creature: and as for his mother-in-law, who stayed at Fred's as long and as often as her daughter would endure her, has anyone who ever knew that notorious old Lady Baker at Bath, at Cheltenham, at Brighton,—wherever trumps and frumps were found together; wherever scandal was cackled; wherever fly-blown reputations were assembled, and dowagers with damaged titles trod over each other for the pas;—who, I say, ever had a good word for that old woman? What party was not bored where she appeared? What tradesman was not done with whom she dealt? I wish with all my heart I was about to narrate a story with a good mother-in-law for a character; but then you know, my dear madam, all good women in novels are insipid. This woman certainly was not. She was not only not insipid, but exceedingly bad tasted. She had a foul, loud tongue, a stupid head, a bad temper, an immense pride and arrogance, an extravagant son, and very little money. Can I say much more of a woman than this? Aha! my good Lady Baker! I was a *mauvais sujet*, was I?—I was leading Fred into smoking, drinking, and low bachelor habits, was I? I, his old friend, who have borrowed money from him any time these twenty years, was not

fit company for you and your precious daughter? Indeed! *I* paid the money I borrowed from him like a man; but did *you* ever pay him, I should like to know? When Mrs. Lovel was in the first column of *The Times*, then Fred and I used to go off to Greenwich and Blackwall, as I said; then his kind old heart was allowed to feel for his friend; then we could have the other bottle of claret without the appearance of Bedford and the coffee, which in Mrs. L.'s time used to be sent in to us before we could ring for a second bottle, although she and Lady Baker had had three glasses each out of the first. Three full glasses each, I give you my word! No, madam, it was your turn to bully me once—now it is mine, and I use it. No, you old Catamaran, though you pretend you never read novels, some of your confounded good-natured friends will let you know of *this* one. Here you are, do you hear? Here you shall be shown up. And so I intend to show up *other* women and *other* men who have offended me. Is one to be subject to slights and scorn, and not have revenge? Kindnesses are easily forgotten: but injuries!—what worthy man does not keep *those* in mind?

Before entering upon the present narrative, may I take leave to inform a candid public, that though it is all true, there is not a word of truth in it; that though Lovel is alive and prosperous, and you very likely have met him, yet I defy you to point him out; that his wife (for he is Lovel the Widower no more) is not the lady you imagine her to be, when you say (as you will persist in doing), 'Oh, that character is intended for Mrs. Thingamy, or was notoriously drawn from Lady So-and-so.' No. You are utterly mistaken. Why, even the advertising-puffers have almost given up that stale stratagem of announcing 'REVELATIONS FROM HIGH LIFE.—The *beau monde* will be startled at recognizing the portraits of some of its brilliant leaders in Miss Wiggins's forthcoming *Roman de Société*.' Or, 'We suspect a certain ducal house will be puzzled to guess how the pitiless author of *May Fair Mysteries* has become acquainted with (and exposed with a fearless hand) *certain family secrets* which were thought only to be known to a few of the very highest members of the aristocracy.' No, I say; these silly baits to catch an unsuspecting public shall not be our arts. If you choose to occupy yourself with trying to ascertain if a certain cap fits one amongst ever so many thousand heads, you *may* possibly pop it on the right one; but the cap-maker will perish before he tells you; unless, of course, he has some private pique to avenge, or malice to wreak, upon some individual who can't by any possibility hit again;—then, indeed, he will come boldly forward and seize upon his victim—(a bishop,

say, or a woman without coarse, quarrelsome male relatives, will be best)—and clap on him, or her, such a cap, with such ears, that all the world shall laugh at the poor wretch, shuddering, and blushing beet-root red, and whimpering deserved tears of rage and vexation at being made the common butt of society. Besides, I dine at Lovel's still; his company and cuisine are amongst the best in London. If they suspected I was taking them off, he and his wife would leave off inviting me. Would any man of a generous disposition lose such a valued friend for a joke, or be so foolish as to show him up in a story? All persons with a decent knowledge of the world will at once banish the thought, as not merely base, but absurd. I am invited to his house one day next week: *vous concevez* I can't mention the very day, for then he would find me out—and of course there would be no more cards for his old friend. He would not like appearing, as it must be owned he does in this memoir, as a man of not very strong mind. He believes himself to be a most determined, resolute person. He is quick in speech, wears a fierce beard, speaks with asperity to his servants (who liken him to a—to that before-named sable or ermine contrivance in which ladies insert their hands in winter), and takes his wife to task so smartly, that I believe she believes he believes he is the master of the house. 'Elizabeth, my love, he must mean A, or B, or D,' I fancy I hear Lovel say; and she says, 'Yes; oh! it is certainly D—his very image!' 'D to a T,' says Lovel (who is a neat wit). *She* may know that I mean to depict her husband in the above unpretending lines: but she will never let me know of her knowledge except by a little extra courtesy; except (may I make this pleasing exception?) by a few more invitations; except by a look of those unfathomable eyes (gracious goodness! to think she wore spectacles ever so long, and put a lid over them as it were!), into which, when you gaze sometimes, you may gaze so deep, and deep, and deep, that I defy you to plumb half-way down into their mystery.

When I was a young man, I had lodgings in Beak Street, Regent Street (I no more have lived in Beak Street than in Belgrave Square: but I choose to say so, and no gentleman will be so rude as to contradict another)—I had lodgings, I say, in Beak Street, Regent Street. Mrs. Prior was the landlady's name. She had seen better days—landladies frequently have. Her husband—he could not be called the landlord, for Mrs. P. was manager of the place,—had been, in happier times, captain or lieutenant in the militia; then of Diss, in Norfolk, of no profession; then of Norwich Castle, a prisoner for debt; then of Southampton Buildings, London, law-writer; then of the Bom-



Retiro Caçadores, in the service of H.M. the Queen of Portugal, lieutenant and paymaster; then of Melina Place, St. George's Fields, etc. — I forbear to give the particulars of an existence which a legal biographer has traced step by step, and which has more than once been the subject of judicial investigation by certain commissioners in Lincoln's-inn Fields. Well, Prior, at this time, swimming out of a hundred shipwrecks, had clambered on to a lighter, as it were, and was clerk to a coal-merchant, by the river-side. 'You conceive, sir,' he would say, 'my employment is only temporary — the fortune of war, the fortune of war!' He smattered words in not a few foreign languages. His person was profusely scented with tobacco. Bearded individuals padding the muddy hoof in the neighbouring Regent Street, would call sometimes of an evening, and ask for 'the captain.' He was known at many neighbouring billiard-tables, and, I imagine, not respected. You will not see enough of Captain Prior to be very weary of him and his coarse swagger, to be disgusted by his repeated requests for small money-loans, or to deplore his loss, which you will please to suppose has happened before the curtain of our present drama draws up. I think two people in the world were sorry for him: his wife, who still loved the memory of the handsome young man who had wooed and won her; his daughter Elizabeth, whom for the last few months of his life, and up to his fatal illness, he every evening conducted to what he called her 'academy.' You are right. Elizabeth is the principal character in this story. When I knew her, a thin, freckled girl of fifteen, with a lean frock, and hair of a reddish hue, she used to borrow my books, and play on the First Floor's piano, when he was from home — Slumley his name was. He was editor of *The Swell*, a newspaper then published; author of a great number of popular songs, a friend of several music-selling houses; and it was by Mr. Slumley's interest that Elizabeth was received as a pupil at what the family called 'the academy.'

Captain Prior then used to conduct his girl to the Academy, but she often had to conduct him home again. Having to wait about the premises for two, or three, or five hours sometimes, whilst Elizabeth was doing her lessons, he would naturally desire to shelter himself from the cold at some neighbouring house of entertainment. Every Friday, a prize of a golden medal, nay, I believe sometimes of twenty-five silver medals, was awarded to Miss Bellenden and other young ladies for their good conduct and assiduity at this academy. Miss Bellenden gave her gold medal to her mother, only keeping five shillings for herself, with which the poor child bought gloves, shoes, and her humble articles of millinery.



Once or twice the captain succeeded in intercepting that piece of gold, and I daresay treated some of his whiskered friends, the clinking trampers of the Quadrant pavement. He was a free-handed fellow when he had anybody's money in his pocket. It was owing to differences regarding the settlement of accounts that he quarrelled with the coal-merchant, his very last employer. Bessy, after yielding once or twice to his importunity, and trying to believe his solemn promises of repayment, had strength of mind to refuse her father the pound which he would have taken. Her five shillings—her poor little slender pocket-money, the representative of her charities and kindnesses to the little brothers and sisters, of her little toilette ornaments, nay, necessities; of those well-mended gloves, of those oft-darned stockings, of those poor boots, which had to walk many a weary mile after midnight; of those little knick-knacks, in the shape of brooch or bracelet, with which the poor child adorned her homely robe or sleeve—her poor five shillings, out of which Mary sometimes found a pair of shoes, or Tommy a flannel jacket, and little Bill a coach and horse—this wretched sum, this mite, which Bessy administered among so many poor—I very much fear her father sometimes confiscated. I charged the child with the fact, and she could not deny me. I vowed a tremendous vow, that if ever I heard of her giving Prior money again, I would quit the lodgings, and never give those children lollipop, nor peg-top, nor sixpence; nor the pungent marmalade, nor the biting gingerbread-nut; nor the theatre-characters, nor the paint-box to illuminate the same; nor the discarded clothes, which became smaller clothes upon the persons of little Tommy and little Bill, for whom Mrs. Prior, and Bessy, and the little maid, cut, clipped, altered, ironed, darned, mangled, with the greatest ingenuity. I say, considering what had passed between me and the Priors—considering those money transactions, and those clothes, and my kindness to the children—it was rather hard that my jam-pots were poached, and my brandy-bottles leaked. And then to frighten her brother with the story of the inexorable creditor—oh, Mrs. Prior!—oh, fie, Mrs. P.!

So Bessy went to her school in a shabby shawl, a faded bonnet, and a poor little lean dress flounced with the mud and dust of all weathers, whereas there were some other young ladies, fellow-pupils of hers, who laid out their gold medals to much greater advantage. Miss Delamere, with her eighteen shillings a week (calling them '*silver medals*,' was only my wit, you see), had twenty new bonnets, silk and satin dresses for all seasons, feathers in abundance, swansdown muffs and tippetts, lovely pocket handkerchiefs and trinkets, and many and many a half-crown mould of

jelly, bottle of sherry, blanket, or what not, for a poor fellow-pupil in distress; and as for Miss Montanville, who had exactly the same sal—well, who had a scholarship of exactly the same value, viz. about fifty pounds yearly—she kept an elegant little cottage in the Regent's Park, a brougham with a horse all over brass harness, and a groom with a prodigious gold lace hat-band, who was treated with frightful contumely at the neighbouring cab-stand; an aunt or a mother, I don't know which (I hope it was only an aunt), always comfortably dressed, and who looked after Montanville: and she herself had bracelets, brooches, and velvet pelisses of the very richest description. But then Miss Montanville was a good economist. *She* was never known to help a poor friend in distress, or give a fainting brother and sister a crust or a glass of wine. She allowed ten shillings a week to her father, whose name was Boskinson, said to be clerk to a chapel in Paddington; but she would never see him—no, not when he was in hospital, where he was so ill; and though she certainly lent Miss Wilder thirteen pounds, she had Wilder arrested upon her promissory note for twenty-four, and sold up every stick of Wilder's furniture, so that the whole academy cried shame! Well, an accident occurred to Miss Montanville, for which those may be sorry who choose. On the evening of the 26th of December, Eighteen hundred and something, when the conductors of the academy were giving their grand annual Christmas Pant—I should say examination of the Academy pupils before their numerous friends—Montanville, who happened to be present, not in her brougham this time, but in an aerial chariot of splendour drawn by doves, fell off a rainbow, and through the roof of the Revolving Shrine of the Amaranthine Queen, thereby very nearly damaging Bellenden, who was occupying the shrine, attired in a light-blue spangled dress, waving a wand, and uttering some idiotic verses composed for her by the Professor of Literature attached to the academy. As for Montanville, let her go shrieking down that trap-door, break her leg, be taken home, and never more be character of ours. She never could speak. Her voice was as hoarse as a fishwoman's. Can that immense stout old box-keeper at the ——— theatre, who limps up to ladies on the first tier, and offers that horrible footstool, which everybody stumbles over, and makes a clumsy curtsy, and looks so knowing and hard as if she recognized an acquaintance in the splendid lady who enters the box—can that old female be the once brilliant Emily Montanville? I am told there are *no* lady box-keepers in the English theatres. This, I submit, is a proof of my consummate care and artifice in rescuing from a prurient

curiosity the individual personages from whom the characters of the present story are taken. Montanville is *not* a box-opener. She *may*, under another name, keep a trinket-shop in the Burlington Arcade, for what you know; but this secret no torture shall induce me to divulge. Life has its rises and its downfalls, and you have had yours, you hobbling old creature. Montanville, indeed! Go thy ways! Here is a shilling for thee. (Thank you, sir.) Take away that confounded footstool, and never let us see thee more!

Now the fairy Amarantha was like a certain dear young lady of whom we have read in early youth. Up to twelve o'clock, attired in sparkling raiment, she leads the dance with the prince (Gradini, known as Grady in his days of banishment at the T. R. Dublin). At supper, she takes her place by the prince's royal father (who is alive now, and still reigns occasionally, so that we will not mention his revered name). She makes believe to drink from the gilded pasteboard, and to eat of the mighty pudding. She smiles as the good old irascible monarch knocks the prime minister and the cooks about: she blazes in splendour: she beams with a thousand jewels, in comparison with which the Koh-i-nor is a wretched lustreless little pebble: she disappears in a chariot, such as a Lord Mayor never rode in:—and at midnight, who is that young woman tripping homeward through the wet streets in a battered bonnet, a cotton shawl, and a lean frock fringed with the dreary winter flounces?

Our Cinderella is up early in the morning: she does no little portion of the house-work: she dresses her sisters and brothers: she prepares papa's breakfast. On days when she has not to go to morning lessons at her academy, she helps with the dinner. Heaven help us! She has often brought mine when I have dined at home, and owns to having made that famous mutton-broth when I had a cold. Foreigners come to the house—professional gentlemen—to see Slumley on the first floor; exiled captains of Spain and Portugal, companions of the warrior her father. It is surprising how she has learned their accents, and has picked up French and Italian, too. And she played the piano in Mr. Slumley's room sometimes, as I have said; but refrained from that presently, and from visiting him altogether. I suspect he was not a man of principle. His Paper used to make direful attacks upon individual reputations; and you would find theatre and opera people most curiously praised and assaulted in *The Swell*. I recollect meeting him, several years after, in the lobby of the opera, in a very noisy frame of mind, when he heard a certain lady's carriage called, and cried out

with exceeding strong language, which need not be accurately reported, 'Look at that woman! Confound her! I made her, sir! Got her an engagement when the family was starving, sir! Did you see her, sir! She wouldn't even look at me!' Nor indeed was Mr. S. at that moment a very agreeable object to behold.

Then I remembered that there had been some quarrel with this man, when we lodged in Beak Street together. If difficulty there was, it was solved *ambulando*. He quitted the lodgings, leaving an excellent and costly piano as security for a heavy bill which he owed to Mrs. Prior, and the instrument was presently fetched away by the music-sellers, its owners. But regarding Mr. S.'s valuable biography, let us speak very gently. You see it is 'an insult to literature' to say that there are disreputable and dishonest persons who write in newspapers.

Nothing, dear friend, escapes your penetration: if a joke is made in your company, you are down upon it instanter, and your smile rewards the wag who amuses you: so you knew at once, whilst I was talking of Elizabeth and her academy, that a theatre was meant, where the poor child danced for a guinea, or five-and-twenty shillings per week. Nay, she must have had not a little skill and merit to advance to the quarter of a hundred; for she was not pretty at this time, only a rough, tawny-haired filly of a girl, with great eyes. Dolphin, the manager, did not think much of her, and she passed before him in his regiment of Sea-nymphs, or Bayadères, or Fairies, or Mazurka maidens (with their fluttering lances and little scarlet slyboots!) scarcely more noticed than private Jones standing under arms in his company when his Royal Highness the Field-Marshal gallops by. There were no dramatic triumphs for Miss Bellenden: no bouquets were flung at her feet: no cunning Mephistopheles—the emissary of some philandering Faustus outside—corrupted her duenna, or brought her caskets of diamonds. Had there been any such admirer for Bellenden, Dolphin would not only not have been shocked, but he would very likely have raised her salary. As it was, though himself, I fear, a person of loose morals, he respected better things. 'That Bellenden's a good honest gurl,' he said to the present writer: 'works hard: gives her money to her family: father a sly old cove. Very good family, I hear they are!' and he passes on to some other of the innumerable subjects which engage a manager.

Now, why should a poor lodging-house keeper make such a mighty secret of having a daughter earning an honest guinea by dancing at a theatre? Why persist in calling the theatre an academy? Why did Mrs. Prior speak of it as such, to me who

knew what the truth was, and to whom Elizabeth herself made no mystery of her calling?

There are actions and events in its life over which decent Poverty often chooses to cast a veil that is not unbecoming wear. We can all, if we are minded, peer through this poor flimsy screen: often there is no shame behind it:—only empty platters, poor scraps, and other threadbare evidence of want and cold. And who is called on to show his rags to the public, and cry out his hunger in the street? At this time (her character has developed itself not so amiably since), Mrs. Prior was outwardly respectable; and yet, as I have said, my groceries were consumed with remarkable rapidity; my wine and brandy bottles were all leaky, until they were excluded from air under a patent lock:—my Morel's raspberry jam, of which I was passionately fond, if exposed on the table for a few hours, was always eaten by the cat, or that wonderful little wretch of a maid-of-all-work, so active, yet so patient, so kind, so dirty, so obliging. Was it the maid who took those groceries? I have seen the *Gazza Ladra*, and know that poor little maids are sometimes wrongfully accused; and besides, in my particular case, I own I don't care who the culprit was. At the year's end, a single man is not much poorer for this house-tax which he pays. One Sunday evening, being confined with a cold, and partaking of that mutton broth which Elizabeth made so well, and which she brought me, I entreated her to bring from the cupboard, of which I gave her the key, a certain brandy-bottle. She saw my face when I looked at her: there was no mistaking its agony. There was scarce any brandy left: it had all leaked away: and it was Sunday, and no good brandy was to be bought that evening.

Elizabeth, I say, saw my grief. She put down the bottle, and she cried: she tried to prevent herself from doing so at first, but she fairly burst into tears.

'My dear—dear child,' says I, seizing her hand, 'you don't suppose I fancy you——'

'No—no!' she says, drawing the large hand over her eyes. 'No—no! but I saw it when you and Mr. Warrington last 'ad some. Oh! do have a patting lock!'

'A patent lock, my dear?' I remarked. 'How odd that you, who have learned to pronounce Italian and French words so well, should make such strange slips in English? Your mother speaks well enough?'

'She was born a lady. She was not sent to be a milliner's girl, as I was, and then among those noisy girls at that—oh! that *place!*' cries Bessy, in a sort of desperation clenching her hand.



Here the bells of St. Beak's began to ring quite cheerily for evening service. I heard 'Elizabeth!' cried out from lower regions by Mrs. Prior's cracked voice. And the maiden went her way to Church, which she and her mother never missed of a Sunday; and I daresay I slept just as well without the brandy-and-water.

Slumley being gone, Mrs. Prior came to me rather wistfully one day, and wanted to know whether I would object to Madame Bentivoglio, the opera-singer, having the first floor? This was too much, indeed! How was my work to go on with that woman practising all day and roaring underneath me? But after sending away so good a customer, I could not refuse to lend the Priors a little more money; and Prior insisted upon treating me to a new stamp, and making out a new and handsome bill for an amount nearly twice as great as the last: which he had no doubt under heaven, and which he pledged his honour as an officer and a gentleman that he would meet. Let me see: That was how many years ago?—Thirteen, fourteen, twenty? Never mind. My fair Elizabeth, I think if you saw your poor old father's signature now, you would pay it. I came upon it lately in an old box I haven't opened these fifteen years, along with some letters written—never mind by whom—and an old glove that I used to set an absurd value by; and that emerald-green tabinet waistcoat which kind old Mrs. Macmanus gave me, and which I wore at the L—d L—t—nt's ball, Ph-n-x Park, Dublin, once, when I danced with *her* there! Lord!—Lord! It would no more meet round my waist now than round Daniel Lambert's. How we outgrow things!

But as I never presented this united bill of £43 odd (the first portion of £23, etc., was advanced by me in order to pay an execution out of the house),—as I never expected to have it paid any more than I did to be Lord Mayor of London,—I say it was a little hard that Mrs. Prior should write off to her brother (she writes a capital letter), blessing Providence that had given him a noble income, promising him the benefit of her prayers, in order that he should long live to enjoy his large salary, and informing him that an obdurate creditor, who shall be nameless (meaning me), who had Captain Prior *in his power* (as if being in possession of that dingy scrawl, I should have known what to do with it), who held Mr. Prior's acceptance for £43:14:4 due on the 3rd July (my bill), would infallibly bring their family to RUIN, unless a part of the money was paid up. When I went up to my old college, and called on Sargent, at Boniface Lodge, he treated me as civilly as if I had been an undergraduate; scarcely spoke

to me in hall, where, of course, I dined at the Fellows' table ; and only asked me to one of Mrs. Sargent's confounded tea-parties during the whole time of my stay. Now it was by this man's entreaty that I went to lodge at Prior's ; he talked to me after dinner one day, he hummed, he ha'd, he blushed, he prated in his pompous way, about an unfortunate sister in London—fatal early marriage—husband, Captain Prior, Knight of the Swan with two Necks of Portugal, most distinguished officer, but imprudent speculator—advantageous lodgings in the centre of London, quiet, though near the Clubs—if I was ill (I am a confirmed invalid), Mrs. Prior, his sister, would nurse me like a mother. So, in a word, I went to Prior's : I took the rooms : I was attracted by some children : Amelia Jane (that little dirty maid before mentioned) dragging a go-cart, containing a little dirty pair ; another marching by them, carrying a fourth well nigh as big as himself. These little folks, having threaded the mighty flood of Regent Street, debouched into the quiet creek of Beak Street, just as I happened to follow them. And the door at which the small caravan halted,—the very door I was in search of,—was opened by Elizabeth, then only just emerging from childhood, with tawny hair falling into her solemn eyes.

The aspect of these little people, which would have deterred many, happened to attract me. I am a lonely man. I may have been ill-treated by some one once, but that is neither here nor there. If I had had children of my own, I think I should have been good to them. I thought Prior a dreadful vulgar wretch, and his wife a scheming, greedy little woman. But the children amused me : and I took the rooms, liking to hear overhead in the morning the patter of their little feet. The person I mean has several ;—husband, judge in the West Indies. *Allons !* now you know how I came to live at Mrs. Prior's.

Though I am now a steady, a *confirmed* old bachelor (I shall call myself Mr. Batchelor, if you please, in this story ; and there is some one far, far away who knows why I will NEVER take another title), I was a gay young fellow enough once. I was not above the pleasures of youth : in fact, I learned quadrilles on purpose to dance with her that long vacation when I went to read with my young friend Lord Viscount Poldoody at Dub—psha ! Be still, thou foolish heart ! Perhaps I mis-spent my time as an undergraduate. Perhaps I read too many novels, occupied myself too much with 'elegant literature' (that used to be our phrase), and spoke too often at the Union, where I had a considerable reputation. But those fine words got me no college prizes : I missed my fellowship : was rather in disgrace with my relations afterwards,



but had a small independence of my own, which I eked out by taking a few pupils for little goes and the common degree. At length, a relation dying, and leaving me a farther small income, I left the university, and came to reside in London.

Now, in my third year at college, there came to St. Boniface a young gentleman, who was one of the few gentlemen-pensioners of our society. His popularity speedily was great. A kindly and simple youth, he would have been liked, I daresay, even though he had been no richer than the rest of us; but this is certain, that flattery, worldliness, mammon-worship, are vices as well known to young as to old boys; and a rich lad at school or college has his followers, tuft-hunters, led-captains, little courts, just as much as any elderly millionaire of Pall Mall, who gazes round his club to see whom he shall take home to dinner, while humble trencher-men wait anxiously, thinking—Ah! will he take me this time? or will he ask that abominable sneak and toady Henchman again? Well—well! this is an old story about parasites and flatterers. My dear good sir, I am not for a moment going to say that *you* ever were one; and I daresay it was very base and mean of us to like a man chiefly on account of his money. ‘I know’—Tom Lovel used to say—‘I know fellows come to my rooms because I have a large allowance, and plenty of my poor old governor’s wine, and give good dinners: I am not deceived; but, at least, it is pleasanter to come to me and have good dinners, and good wine, than to go to Jack Highson’s dreary tea and turnout, or to Ned Roper’s abominable Oxbridge port.’ And so I admit at once that Lovel’s parties *were* more agreeable than most men’s in the college. Perhaps the goodness of the fare, by pleasing the guests, made them more pleasant. A dinner in hall, and a pewter plate is all very well, and I can say grace before it with all my heart; but a dinner with fish from London, game, and two or three nice little *entrées*, is better—and there was no better cook in the university than ours at St. Boniface, and ah, me! there were appetites then, and digestions which rendered the good dinner doubly good.

Between me and young Lovel a friendship sprang up, which, I trust, even the publication of this story will not diminish. There is a period, immediately after the taking of his bachelor’s degree, when many a university-man finds himself embarrassed. The tradesmen rather rudely press for a settlement of their accounts. Those prints we ordered *calidi juventâ*; those shirt-studs and pins which the jewellers would persist in thrusting into our artless bosoms; those fine coats we would insist on having for our books, as well as ourselves; all these have to be paid for by the graduate.

And my father, who was then alive, refusing to meet these demands, under the—I own—just plea, that my allowance had been ample, and that my half-sisters ought not to be mulcted of their slender portions, in consequence of my extravagance, I should have been subject to very serious inconvenience—nay, possibly, to personal incarceration, had not Lovel, at the risk of rustication, rushed up to London to his mother (who then had *especial reasons* for being very gracious with her son), obtained a supply of money from her, and brought it to me at Mr. Shackell's horrible hotel, where I was lodged. He had tears in his kind eyes; he grasped my hand a hundred and hundred times as he flung the notes into my lap; and the recording tutor (Sargent was only tutor then) who was going to bring him up before the Master for breach of discipline, dashed away a drop from his own lid, when, with a moving eloquence, I told what had happened, and blotted out the transaction with some particular old 1811 Port, of which we freely partook in his private rooms that evening. By laborious instalments, I had the happiness to pay Lovel back. I took pupils, as I said; I engaged in literary pursuits; I became connected with a literary periodical, and I am ashamed to say, I imposed myself upon the public as a good classical scholar. I was not thought the less learned, when my relative dying, I found myself in possession of a small independency; and my *Translations from the Greek*, my *Poems by Beta*, and my articles in the paper of which I was part proprietor for several years, have had their little success in their day.

Indeed at Oxbridge, if I did not obtain university honours, at least I showed literary tastes. I got the prize essay one year at Boniface, and plead guilty to having written essays, poems, and a tragedy. My college friends had a joke at my expense (a very small joke serves to amuse those port-wine-bibbing fogies, and keeps them laughing for ever so long a time)—they are welcome, I say, to make merry at my charges—in respect of a certain bargain which I made on coming to London, and in which, had I been Moses Primrose purchasing green spectacles, I could scarcely have been more taken in. *My* Jenkinson was an old college acquaintance, whom I was idiot enough to imagine a respectable man: the fellow had a very smooth tongue, and sleek, sanctified exterior. He was rather a popular preacher, and used to cry a good deal in the pulpit. He, and a queer wine-merchant and bill-discounter, Sherrick by name, had somehow got possession of that neat literary paper, *The Museum*, which, perhaps, you remember; and this eligible literary property my friend Honeyman, with his wheedling tongue, induced me to purchase. I bear no

malice: the fellow is in India now, where I trust he pays his butcher and baker. He was in dreadful straits for money when he sold me *The Museum*. He began crying when I told him some short time afterwards that he was a swindler, and from behind his pocket-handkerchief sobbed a prayer that I should one day think better of him; whereas my remarks to the same effect produced an exactly contrary impression upon his accomplice, Sherrick, who burst out laughing in my face, and said, 'The more fool you.' Mr. Sherrick was right. He was a fool, without mistake, who had any money-dealing with him; and poor Honeyman was right, too; I don't think so badly of him as I did. A fellow so hardly pinched for money could not resist the temptation of extracting it from such a greenhorn. I daresay I gave myself airs as editor of that confounded *Museum*, and proposed to educate the public taste, to diffuse morality and sound literature throughout the nation, and to pocket a liberal salary in return for my services. I daresay I printed my own sonnets, my own tragedy, my own verses (to a Being who shall be nameless, but whose conduct has caused a faithful heart to bleed not a little). I daresay I wrote satirical articles, in which I piqued myself upon the fineness of my wit, and criticisms, got up for the nonce, out of encyclopædias and biographical dictionaries; so that I would be actually astounded at my own knowledge. I daresay I made a gaby of myself to the world: pray, my good friend, hast thou never done likewise? If thou hast never been a fool, be sure thou wilt never be a wise man.

I think it was my brilliant *confrère* on the first floor (he had pecuniary transactions with Sherrick, and visited two or three of her Majesty's metropolitan prisons at that gentleman's suit) who first showed me how grievously I had been cheated in the newspaper matter. Slumley wrote for a paper printed at our office. The same boy often brought proofs to both of us—a little bit of a puny bright-eyed chap, who looked scarce twelve years old, when he was sixteen; who in wit was a man, when in stature he was a child,—like many other children of the poor.

This little Dick Bedford used to sit many hours asleep on my landing-place or Slumley's, whilst we were preparing our invaluable compositions within our respective apartments. S. was a good-natured reprobate, and gave the child of his meat and his drink. I used to like to help the little man from my breakfast, and see him enjoy the meal. As he sate, with his bag on his knees, his head sunk in sleep, his little high-lows scarce reaching the floor, Dick made a touching little picture. The whole house was fond of him. The tipsy captain nodded

him a welcome as he swaggered downstairs, stock, and coat, and waistcoat in hand, to his worship's toilette in the back kitchen. The children and Dick were good friends: and Elizabeth patronised him, and talked with him now and again, in her grave way. You know Clancy, the composer?—know him better, perhaps, under his name of Friedrich Donner? Donner used to write music to Slumley's words, or *vice versa*; and would come now and again to Beak Street, where he and his poet would try their joint work at the piano. At the sound of that music, little Dick's eyes used to kindle. 'Oh, it's prime!' said the young enthusiast. And I will say, that good-natured miscreant of a Slumley not only gave the child pence, but tickets for the play, concerts, and so forth. Dick had a neat little suit of clothes at home; his mother made him a very nice little waistcoat out of my undergraduate's gown; and he and she, a decent woman, when in their best raiment, looked respectable enough for any theatre-pit in England.

Amongst other places of public amusement which he attended, Mr. Dick frequented the academy where Miss Bellenden danced, and whence poor Elizabeth Prior issued forth after midnight in her shabby frock. And once, the captain, Elizabeth's father and protector, being unable to walk very accurately, and noisy and incoherent in his speech, so that the attention of Messieurs of the police was directed towards him, Dick came up, placed Elizabeth and her father in a cab, paid the fare with his own money, and brought the whole party home in triumph, himself sitting on the box of the vehicle. I chanced to be coming home myself (from one of Mrs. Wateringham's elegant tea *soirées*, in Dorset Square), and reached my door just at the arrival of Dick and his caravan. 'Here, cabbly!' says Dick, handing out the fare, and looking with his brightest eyes. It is pleasanter to look at that beaming little face, than at the captain yonder, reeling into his house, supported by his daughter. Dick cried, Elizabeth told me, when, a week afterwards, she wanted to pay him back his shilling; and she said he was a strange child, that he was.

I revert to my friend Lovel. I was coaching Lovel for his degree (which, between ourselves, I think he never would have attained), when he suddenly announced to me, from Weymouth, where he was passing the vacation, his intention to quit the university, and to travel abroad. 'Events have happened, dear friend,' he wrote, 'which will make my mother's home miserable to me (I little knew when I went to town about your business, what caused her *wonderful complaisance* to me). She would

have broken my heart, Charles (my Christian name is Charles), but its wounds have found *a consoler* !'

Now, in this little chapter, there are some little mysteries propounded, upon which, were I not above any such artifice, I might easily leave the reader to ponder for a month.

1. Why did Mrs. Prior, at the lodgings, persist in calling the theatre at which her daughter danced the Academy?

2. What were the special reasons why Mrs. Lovel should be very gracious with her son, and give him £150 as soon as he asked for the money?

3. Why was Fred Lovel's heart nearly broken? and 4. Who was his consoler?

I answer these at once, and without the slightest attempt at delay or circumlocution. 1. Mrs. Prior, who had repeatedly received money from her brother, John Erasmus Sargent, D.D., Master of St. Boniface College, knew perfectly well that if the Master (whom she already pestered out of his life) heard that she had sent a niece of his on the stage, he would never give her another shilling.

2. The reason why Emma, widow of the late Adolphus Loeffel, of Whitechapel Road, sugar-baker, was so particularly gracious to her son, Adolphus Frederic Lovel, Esq., of St. Boniface College, Oxbridge, and principal partner in the house of Loeffel aforesaid, an infant, was that she, Emma, was about to contract a second marriage with the Rev. Samuel Bonnington.

3. Fred Lovel's heart was so very much broken by this intelligence, that he gave himself airs of Hamlet, dressed in black, wore his long fair hair over his eyes, and exhibited a hundred signs of grief and desperation: until—

4. Louisa (widow of the late Sir Popham Baker, of Bakers-town, Co. Kilkenny, Baronet) induced Mr. Lovel to take a trip on the Rhine with her and Cecilia, fourth and only unmarried daughter of the aforesaid Sir Popham Baker, deceased.

My opinion of Cecilia I have candidly given in a previous page. I adhere to that opinion. I shall not repeat it. The subject is disagreeable to me, as the woman herself was in life. What Fred found in her to admire, I cannot tell: lucky for us all that tastes, men, women, vary. You will never see her alive in this history. That is her picture, painted by the late Mr. Gandish. She stands fingering that harp with which she has often driven me half mad with her *Tara's Halls* and her *Poor Marianne*. She used to bully Fred so, and be so rude to his guests, that in order to pacify her, he would meanly say, 'Do, my love, let us have a little music!' and thrumpty—thrumpty,



off would go her gloves, and *Tara's Halls* would begin. 'The harp that *once*' indeed! the accursed catgut scarce knew any other music, and 'once' was a hundred times at least in *my* hearing. Then came the period when I was treated to the cold joint which I have mentioned; and, not liking it, I gave up going to Shrublands.

So, too, did my Lady Baker, but not of *her own free will*, mind you. *She* did not quit the premises because her reception was too cold, but because the house was made a great deal too hot for her. I remember Fred coming to me in high spirits, and describing to me, with no little humour, a great battle between Cecilia and Lady Baker, and her ladyship's defeat and flight. She fled, however, only as far as Putney village, where she formed again, as it were, and fortified herself in a lodging. Next day she made a desperate and feeble attack, presenting herself at Shrublands lodge-gate, and threatening that she and sorrow would sit down before it; and that all the world should know how a daughter treated her mother. But the gate was locked, and Barnet, the gardener, appeared behind it, saying, 'Since you *are* come, my lady, perhaps you will pay my missis the four-and-twenty shillings you borrowed of her.' And he grinned at her through the bars, until she fled before him, cowering. Lovel paid the little forgotten account; the best four-and-twenty shillings he had ever laid out, he said.

Eight years passed away; during the last four of which I scarce saw my old friend, except at clubs and taverns, where we met privily, and renewed, not old warmth and hilarity, but old kindness. One winter he took his family abroad; Cecilia's health was delicate, Lovel told me, and the doctor had advised that she should spend a winter in the south. He did not stay with them: he had pressing affairs at home; he had embarked in many businesses besides the paternal sugar-bakery; was concerned in companies, a director of a joint-stock bank, a man in whose fire were many irons. A faithful governess was with the children; a faithful man and maid were in attendance on the invalid; and Lovel, adoring his wife, as he certainly did, yet supported her absence with great equanimity.

In the spring I was not a little scared to read amongst the deaths in the newspaper:—'At Naples, of scarlet fever, on the 25th ult., Cecilia, wife of Frederick Lovel, Esq., and daughter of the late Sir Popham Baker, Bart.' I knew what my friend's grief would be. He had hurried abroad at the news of her illness; he did not reach Naples in time to receive the last words of his poor Cecilia.



I AM REFERRED TO CECILIA.



Some months after the catastrophe, I had a note from Shrublands. Lovel wrote quite in the old affectionate tone. He begged his dear old friend to go to him, and console him in his solitude. Would I come to dinner that evening?

Of course I went off to him straightway. I found him in deep sables in the drawing-room with his children, and I confess I was not astonished to see my Lady Baker once more in that room.

'You seem surprised to see me here, Mr. Batchelor!' says her ladyship, with that grace and good-breeding which she generally exhibited; for if she accepted the benefits, she took care to insult those from whom she received them.

'Indeed, no,' said I, looking at Lovel, who piteously hung down his head. He had his little Cissy at his knee; he was sitting under the portrait of the defunct musician, whose harp, now muffled in leather, stood dimly in the corner of the room.

'I am here not at my own wish, but from a feeling of duty towards that—departed—angel!' says Lady Baker, pointing to the picture.

'I am sure when mamma was here, you were always quarrelling,' says little Popham, with a scowl.

'This is the way those innocent children have been taught to regard me,' cries grandmamma.

'Silence, Pop!' says papa, 'and don't be a rude boy.'

'Isn't Pop a rude boy?' echoes Cissy.

'Silence, Pop,' continues papa, 'or you must go up to Miss Prior.'

## CHAPTER II.

### IN WHICH MISS PRIOR IS KEPT AT THE DOOR.



Of course we all know who she was, the Miss Prior of Shrublands, whom papa and grandmamma called to the unruly children. Years had passed since I had shaken the Beak Street dust off my feet. The brass plate of 'Prior' was removed from the once familiar door, and screwed, for what I can tell, on to the late reprobate owner's coffin. A little eruption of mushroom-formed brass knobs I saw on the doorpost when I passed by it last week, and CAFÉ DES AMBASSADEURS was thereon inscribed, with three fly-blown blue teacups, a

couple of coffee-pots of the well-known Britannia metal, and two freckled copies of the *Indépendance Belge* hanging over the window blind. Were those their Excellencies the Ambassadors at the door, smoking cheroots? Pool and Billiards were written on their countenances, their hats, their elbows. They may have been ambassadors down on their luck, as the phrase is. They were in disgrace, no doubt, at the court of her imperial majesty Queen Fortune. Men as shabby have retrieved their disgraces ere now, washed their cloudy faces, strapped their dingy waistcoats with cordons, and stepped into fine carriages from quarters not a whit more reputable than the Café des Ambassadeurs. If I had lived in the Leicester Square neighbourhood, and kept a *café*,

I would always treat foreigners with respect. They may be billiard-markers now, or doing a little shady police business ; but why should they not afterwards be generals and great officers of state ? Suppose that gentleman is at present a barber, with his tongs and stick of fixature for the mustachios, how do you know he has not his epaulettes and his *bâton de maréchal* in the same pouch ? I see engraven on the second-floor bell, on my rooms, 'Plugwell.' Who can Plugwell be, whose feet now warm at the fire where I sate many a long evening ? And this gentleman with the fur collar, the straggling beard, the frank and engaging leer, the somewhat husky voice, who is calling out on the doorstep, 'Step in, and 'ave it done. Your correct likeness, only one shilling'—is he an ambassador, too ? Ah, no : he is only the *chargé d'affaires* of a photographer who lives upstairs ; no doubt where the little ones used to be. Law bless me ! Photography was an infant, and in the nursery, too, when *we* lived in Beak Street.

Shall I own that, for old time's sake, I went upstairs, and 'ad it done'—that correct likeness, price one shilling ? Would Some One (I have said, I think, that the party in question is well married in a distant island) like to have the thing, I wonder, and be reminded of a man whom she knew in life's prime, with brown curly locks, as she looked on the effigy of this elderly gentleman, with a forehead as bare as a billiard-ball ? As I went up and down that darkling stair, the ghosts of the Prior children peeped out from the banisters ; the little faces smiled in the twilight : it may be wounds (of the heart) throbbled and bled again—oh, how freshly and keenly ! How infernally I have suffered behind that door in that room—I mean that one where Plugwell now lives. Confound Plugwell ! I wonder what that woman thinks of me as she sees me shaking my fist at the door. Do you think me mad, madam ? I don't care if you do. Do you think when I spoke anon of the ghosts of Prior's children, I mean that any of them are dead. None are, that I know of. A great hulking Bluecoat boy, with fluffy whiskers, spoke to me not long since, in an awful bass voice, and announced his name as 'Gus Prior.' And 'How's Elizabeth ?' he added, nodding his bullet head. Elizabeth, indeed, you great vulgar boy ! Elizabeth,—and, by the way, how long we have been keeping her waiting !

You see, as I beheld her, a heap of memories struck upon me, and I could not help chattering ; when of course—and you are perfectly right, only you might just as well have left the observation alone : for I knew quite well what you were going to say—when I had much better have held my tongue. Elizabeth means

a history to me. She came to me at a critical period of my life. Bleeding and wounded from the conduct of that other individual (by her present name of Mrs. O'D—her present O'D—ous name—I say, I will never—never call her)—desperately wounded and miserable on my return from a neighbouring capital, I went back to my lodgings in Beak Street, and there there grew up a strange intimacy between me and my landlady's young daughter. I told her my story—indeed, I believe I told anybody who would listen. She seemed to compassionate me. She would come wistfully into my rooms, bringing me my gruel and things (I could scarcely bear to eat for awhile after—after that affair to which I may have alluded before)—she used to come to me, and she used to pity me, and I used to tell her all, and to tell her over and over again. Days and days have I passed tearing my heart out in that second-floor room which answers to the name of Plugwell now. Afternoon after afternoon have I spent there, and poured out my story of love and wrong to Elizabeth, showed her that waistcoat I told you of—that glove (her hand wasn't so very small either)—her letters, those two or three vacuous, meaningless letters, with 'My dear sir, mamma hopes you will come to tea;' or, 'If dear Mr. Batchelor *should* be riding in the Phoenix Park near the *Long Milestone*, about 2, my sister and I will be in the car, and,' etc.; or, 'Oh, you kind man! the tickets (she called it *tickuts*—by heaven! she did) were too welcome, and the *bouquays* too lovely' (this word, I saw, had been operated on with a penknife. I found no faults, not even in her spelling—then); or—never mind what more. But more of this *puling*, of this *humbug*, of this *bad spelling*, of this infernal jilting, swindling, heartless hypocrisy (all her mother's doing, I own; for until he *got his place*, my rival was not so well received as I was)—more of this RUBBISH, I say, I showed Elizabeth, and she pitied me!

She used to come to me day after day, and I used to talk to her. She used not to say much. Perhaps she did not listen; but I did not care for that. On—and on—and on I would go with my prate about my passion, my wrongs, and despair; and untiring as my complaints were, still more constant was my little hearer's compassion. Mamma's shrill voice would come to put an end to our conversation, and she would rise up with an 'Oh, bother!' and go away; but the next day the good girl was sure to come to me again, when we would have another repetition of our tragedy.

I daresay you are beginning to suppose (what, after all, is a very common case, and certainly *no conjuror* is wanted to make the guess) that out of all this crying and sentimentality, which a

soft-hearted old fool of a man poured out to a young girl—out of all this whimpering and pity, something which is said to be akin to pity might arise. But in this, my good madam, you are utterly wrong. Some people have the small-pox twice; I do not. In my case, if a heart is broke, it's broke; if a flower is withered, it's withered. If I choose to put my grief in a ridiculous light, why not? Why, do you suppose I am going to make a tragedy of such an old, used-up, battered, stale, vulgar, trivial, every-day subject as a jilt who plays with a man's passion, and laughs at him, and leaves him? Tragedy indeed! Oh, yes! poison—black-edged note-paper—Waterloo Bridge—one more unfortunate, and so forth! No: if she goes, let her go!—*si celeres quitit pennas*, I puff the what-d'ye-call-it away! But I'll have no tragedy, mind you!

Well! it must be confessed that a man desperately in love (as I fear I must own I then was, and a good deal cut up by Glorvina's conduct) is a most selfish being: whilst women are so soft and unselfish that they can forget or disguise their own sorrows for a while, whilst they minister to a friend in affliction. I did not see, though I talked with her daily, on my return from that accursed Dublin, that my little Elizabeth was pale and *distracte*, and sad and silent. She would sit quite dumb whilst I chattered, her hands between her knees, or draw one of them over her eyes. She would say, 'Oh, yes! Poor fellow—poor fellow!' now and again, as giving a melancholy confirmation of my dismal stories; but mostly she remained quiet, her head drooping towards the ground, a hand to her chin, her feet to the fender.

I was one day harping on the usual string. I was telling Elizabeth how, after presents had been accepted, after letters had passed between us (if her scrawl could be called letters, if my impassioned song could be so construed), after everything but the actual word had passed our lips—I was telling Elizabeth how, on one accursed day, Glorvina's mother greeted me on my arrival in M-rr-n Square, by saying, 'Dear—dear Mr. Batchelor, we look on you quite as one of the family! Congratulate me—congratulate my child! Dear Tom has got his appointment as Recorder of Tobago; and it is to be a match between him and his cousin Glory.'

'His cousin *What!*' I shriek with a maniac laugh.

'My poor Glorvina! Sure the children have been fond of each other ever since they could speak. I knew your kind heart would be the first to rejoice in their happiness.'

'And so,' say I—ending the story—'I, who thought myself loved, was left without a pang of pity: I, who could mention a



hundred reasons why I thought Glorvina well disposed to me, was told she regarded me as an *uncle*! Were her letters such as nieces write? Who ever heard of an uncle walking round Merriion Square for hours of a rainy night, and looking up to a bedroom window, because his *niece*, forsooth, was behind it? I had set my whole heart on the east, and this was the return I got for it. For months she cajoles me—her eyes follow me, her cursed smiles welcome and fascinate me, and at a moment, at the beck of another—she laughs at me and leaves me!’

At this, my little pale Elizabeth, still hanging down, cries, ‘Oh, the villain! the villain!’ and sobs so that you might have thought her little heart would break.

‘Nay,’ said I, ‘my dear, Mr. O’Dowd is no villain. His uncle, Sir Hector, was as gallant an old officer as any in the service. His aunt was a Molloy, of Molloy’s Town, and they are of excellent family, though, I believe, of embarrassed circumstances; and young Tom——’

‘Tom?’ cries Elizabeth, with a pale, bewildered look. ‘*His name wasn’t Tom, dear Mr. Batchelor; his name was Woo-wo-illiam!*’ and the tears begin again.

Ah, my child! my child! my poor young creature! and you, too, have felt the infernal stroke. You, too, have passed the tossing nights of pain—have heard the dreary hours toll—have looked at the cheerless sunrise with your blank sleepless eyes—have woke out of dreams, mayhap, in which the beloved was smiling on you, whispering love-words—oh! how sweet and fondly remembered! What!—your heart has been robbed, too, and your treasury is rifled and empty!—poor girl! And I looked in that sad face, and saw no grief there! You could do your little sweet endeavour to soothe my wounded heart, and I never saw yours was bleeding! Did you suffer more than I did, my poor little maid? I hope not. Are you so young, and is all the flower of life blighted for you? the cup without savour, the sun blotted, or almost invisible over your head? The truth came on me all at once: I felt ashamed that my own selfish grief should have made me blind to hers.

‘What!’ said I, ‘my poor child. Was it——?’ and I pointed with my finger *downwards*.

She nodded her poor head.

I knew it was the lodger who had taken the first floor shortly after Slumley’s departure. He was an officer in the Bombay Army. He had had the lodgings for three months. He had sailed for India shortly before I returned home from Dublin.

Elizabeth is waiting all this time—shall she come in? No,

not yet. I have still a little more to say about the Priors.

You understand that she was no longer Miss Prior of Beak Street, and that mansion, even at the time of which I write, had been long handed over to other tenants. The captain dead, his widow with many tears pressed me to remain with her, and I did, never having been able to resist that kind of appeal. Her statements regarding her affairs were not strictly correct. Are not women sometimes incorrect about money matters?—A landlord (not unjustly indignant) quickly handed over the mansion in Beak Street to other tenants. The Queen's taxes swooped down on poor Mrs. Prior's scanty furniture—on hers?—on mine likewise; on my neatly-bound college books, emblazoned with the effigy of Bonifacius, our patron, and of Bishop Budgeon, our founder; on my elegant Raphael Morghen prints, purchased in undergraduate days—(ye Powers! what *did* make us boys go tick for fifteen-guinea proofs of Raphael, Dying Stags, Duke of Wellington Banquets, and the like?); my harmonium, at which SOME ONE has warbled songs of my composition—(I mean the words, artfully describing my passions, my hopes, or my despair); on my rich set of Bohemian glass, bought on the Zeil, Frankfort O.M.; on my picture of my father, the late Captain Batchelor (Hoppner) R.N., in white ducks, and a telescope, pointing, of course, to a tempest, in the midst of which was a naval engagement; on my poor mother's miniature, by old Adam Buck, in pencil and pink, with no waist to speak of at all; my tea and cream pots (bullion), with a hundred such fond knick-knacks as decorate the chamber of a lonely man. I found all these household treasures in possession of the myrmidons of the law, and had to pay the Priors' taxes with this hand, before I could be reintegrated in my own property. Mrs. Prior could only pay me back with a widow's tears and blessings (Prior had quitted ere this time a world where he had long ceased to be of use or ornament). The tears and blessings, I say, she offered me freely, and they were all very well. But why go on tampering with the tea-box, madam? Why put your finger—your finger?—your whole paw—in the jam-pot? And it is a horrible fact that the wine and spirit bottles were just as leaky after Prior's decease as they had been during his disreputable lifetime. One afternoon, having a sudden occasion to return to my lodgings, I found my wretched landlady in the very act of marauding sherry. She gave an hysterical laugh, and then burst into tears. She declared that since poor Prior's death she hardly knew what she said or did. She may have been incoherent; she was; but she certainly spoke truth on *this* occasion.



I am speaking lightly—flippantly, if you please—about this old Mrs. Prior; with her hard, eager smile; her weazened face, her frowning look, her cruel voice; and yet, goodness knows, I could, if I liked, be serious as a sermonizer. Why, this woman had once red cheeks, and was well-looking enough, and told few lies, and stole no sherry, and felt the tender passions of the heart, and I daresay kissed the weak old beneficed clergyman her father very fondly and remorsefully that night when she took leave of him to skip round to the back garden-gate and run away with Mr. Prior. Maternal instinct she had, for she nursed her young as best she could from her lean breast, and went about hungrily, robbing and pilfering for them. On Sundays she furbished up that threadbare black silk gown and bonnet, ironed the collar, and clung desperately to church. She had a feeble pencil drawing of the vicarage in Dorsetshire, and *silhouettes* of her father and mother, which were hung up in the lodgings wherever she went. She migrated much; wherever she went she fastened on the gown of the clergyman of the parish; spoke of her dear father the vicar, of her wealthy and gifted brother the Master of Boniface, with a reticence which implied that Dr. Sargent might do more for his poor sister and her family, if he would. She plumed herself (oh! those poor moulting old plumes!) upon belonging to the clergy; had read a good deal of good sound old-fashioned theology in early life, and wrote a noble hand, in which she had been used to copy her father's sermons. She used to put cases of conscience, to present her humble duty to the Rev. Mr. Green, and ask explanation of such and such a passage of his admirable sermon, and bring the subject round so as to be reminded of certain quotations of Hooker, Beveridge, Jeremy Taylor. I think she had an old commonplace book with a score of these extracts, and she worked them in very amusingly and dexterously into her conversation. Green would be interested: perhaps pretty young Mrs. Green would call, secretly rather shocked at the coldness of old Dr. Brown, the rector, about Mrs. Prior. Between Green and Mrs. Prior money transactions would ensue: Mrs. Green's visits would cease: Mrs. Prior was an expensive woman to know. I remember Pye of Maudlin, just before he 'went over,' was perpetually in Mrs. Prior's back parlour with little books, pictures, medals, etc. etc.—you know. They called poor Jack a Jesuit at Oxbridge; but one year at Rome I met him (with a half-crown shaved out of his head, and a hat as big as Don Basilio's); and he said: 'My dear Batchelor, do you know that person at your lodgings? I think she was an artful creature. She borrowed fourteen pounds of me, and I forget how much of—seven, I think

—of Barfoot, of Corpus, just—just before we were received. And I believe she absolutely got another loan from Pummel, to be able to get out of the hands of us Jesuits. Are you going to hear the Cardinal? Do—do go and hear him—everybody does; it's the most fashionable thing in Rome.' And from this I opine that there are slyboots in other communions besides that of Rome.

Now Mamma Prior had not been unaware of the love-passages between her daughter and the fugitive Bombay captain. Like Elizabeth, she called Captain Walkingham 'villain' readily enough; but, if I know woman's nature in the least (and I don't), the old schemer had thrown her daughter only too frequently in the officer's way, had done no small portion of the flirting herself, had allowed poor Bessy to receive presents from Captain Walkingham, and had been the manager and directress of much of the mischief which ensued. You see, in this humble class of life, unprincipled mothers *will* coax and wheedle and cajole gentlemen whom they suppose to be eligible, in order to procure an establishment for their darling children! What the Prioress did was done from the best motives of course. 'Never—never did the monster see Bessie without me, or one or two of her brothers and sisters, and Jack and dear Ellen are as sharp children as any in England!' protested the indignant Mrs. Prior to me; 'and if one of my boys had been grown up, Walkingham never would have dared to act as he did—the unprincipled wretch! My poor husband would have punished the villain as he deserved; but what could he do in his shattered state of health? Oh! you men, —you men, Mr. Batchelor! how *unprincipled* you are!'

'Why, my good Mrs. Prior,' said I, 'you let Elizabeth come to my room often enough.'

'To have the conversation of her uncle's friend, of an educated man, of a man so much older than herself! Of course, dear sir! Would not a mother wish every advantage for her child? and whom could I trust, if not you, who have ever been such a friend to me and mine?' asks Mrs. Prior, wiping her dry eyes with the corner of her handkerchief, as she stands by my fire, my monthly bills in hand—written in her neat old-fashioned writing, and calculated with that prodigal liberality which she always exercised in compiling the little accounts between us. 'Why, bless me!' says my cousin, little Mrs. Skinner, coming to see me once when I was unwell, and examining one of the just-mentioned documents —'bless me! Charles, you consume more tea than all my family, though we are seven in the parlour, and as much sugar and butter —well, it's no wonder you are bilious!'

'But then, my dear, I like my tea so *very* strong,' says I;

‘and you take yours uncommonly mild. I have remarked it at your parties.’

‘It’s a shame that a man should be robbed so,’ cried Mrs. S.

‘How kind it is of you to cry thieves, Flora!’ I reply.

‘It’s my duty, Charles!’ exclaims my cousin. ‘And I should like to know who that great, tall, gawky red-haired girl in the passage is?’

Ah me! the name of the only woman who ever had possession of this heart was not Elizabeth; though I own I did think at one time that my little schemer of a landlady would not have objected if I had proposed to make Miss Prior Mrs. Batchelor. And it is not only the poor and needy who have this mania, but the rich too. In the very highest circles, as I am informed by the best authorities, this match-making goes on. Ah woman—woman!—ah wedded wife!—ah fond mother of fair daughters! how strange thy passion is to add to thy titles that of mother-in-law! I am told, when you have got the title, it is often but a bitterness and a disappointment. Very likely the son-in-law is rude to you, the coarse, ungrateful brute! and very possibly the daughter rebels, the thankless serpent! And yet you will go on scheming: and having met only with disappointment from Louisa and her husband, you will try and get one for Jemima, and Maria, and down even to little Toddles coming out of the nursery in her red shoes! When you see her with little Tommy, your neighbour’s child, fighting over the same Noah’s ark, or clambering on the same rocking-horse, I make no doubt, in your fond silly head, you are thinking, ‘Will those little people meet some twenty years hence?’ And you give Tommy a very large piece of cake, and have a fine present for him on the Christmas tree—you know you do, though he is but a rude, noisy child, and has already beaten Toddles, and taken her doll away from her, and made her cry. I remember, when I myself was suffering from the conduct of a young woman in—in a capital which is distinguished by a viceregal court—and from *her* heartlessness, as well as that of her relative, who I once thought would be *my* mother-in-law—shrieking out to a friend who happened to be spouting some lines from Tennyson’s ‘Ulysses’:—‘By George! Warrington, I have no doubt that when the young syrens set their green caps at the old Greek captain and his crew, waving and beckoning him with their white arms and glancing smiles, and wheedling him with their sweetest pipes—I make no doubt, sir, that the *mother syrens* were behind the rocks (with their dyed fronts and cheeks painted, so as to resist water), and calling out—“Now, Halcyone, my child, that air from the *Pirata*! Now, Glaukopis, dear, look well at that old

gentleman at the helm! Bathykolpos, love, there's a young sailor on the maintop, who will tumble right down into your lap if you beckon him!" And so on—and so on.' And I laughed a wild shriek of despair. For I, too, have been on the dangerous island, and come away thence, mad, furious, wanting a strait-waistcoat.

And so, when a white-armed syren, named Glorvina, was bedevilling *me* with her all too tempting ogling and singing, I did not see at the time, but *now* I know, that her artful mother was egging that artful child on.

How, when the captain died, bailiffs and executions took possession of his premises, I have told in a previous page, nor do I care to enlarge much upon the odious theme. I think the bailiffs were on the premises before Prior's exit; but he did not know of their presence. If I had to buy them out, 'twas no great matter: only I say it *was* hard of Mrs. Prior to represent me in the character of Shylock to the Master of Boniface. Well—well! I suppose there are other gentlemen besides Mr. Charles Batchelor who have been misrepresented in this life. Sargent and I made up matters afterwards, and Miss Bessy was the cause of our coming together again. 'Upon my word, my dear Batchelor,' says he one Christmas, when I went up to the old college, 'I did not know how much my—ahem!—my family was obliged to you! My—ahem!—niece, Miss Prior, has informed me of various acts of—ahem!—generosity which you showed to my poor sister, and her still more wretched husband. You got my second—ahem!—nephew—pardon me if I forget his Christian name—into the what-d'-you-call-'em—Bluecoat School; you have been, on various occasions, of considerable pecuniary service to my sister's family. A man need not take high university honours to have a good—ahem!—heart; and, upon my word, Batchelor, I and my—ahem!—wife—are sincerely obliged to you.'

'I tell you what, Master,' said I, 'there *is* a point upon which you ought really to be obliged to me, and in which I have been the means of putting money into your pocket too.'

'I confess I fail to comprehend you,' says the Master, with his grandest air.

'I have got you and Mrs. Sargent a very good governess for your children, at the very smallest remuneration,' says I.

'Do you know the charges that unhappy sister of mine and her family have put me to already?' says the Master, turning as red as his hood.

'They have formed the frequent subject of your conversation,' I replied. 'You have had Bessy as a governess——'

'A nursery governess—she has learned Latin, and a great deal more, since she has been in my house!' cries the Master.

'A nursery governess at the wages of a housemaid,' I continued, as bold as Corinthian brass.

'Does my niece, does my—ahem!—children's governess, complain of my treatment in my college?' cries the Master.

'My dear Master,' I asked, 'you don't suppose I would have listened to her complaints, or, at any rate, have repeated them, until now.'

'And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?' says the Master, pacing up and down his study in a fume, under the portraits of Holy Bonifacius, Bishop Budgeon, and all the defunct bigwigs of the college. 'And why now, Batchelor, I should like to know?' says he.

'Because, though, after staying with you for three years, and having improved herself greatly, as every woman must in your society, my dear Master, Miss Prior is worth at least fifty guineas a year more than you give her—I would not have had her speak until she had found a better place.'

'You mean to say she proposes to go away?'

'A wealthy friend of mine, who was a member of our college, by the way, wants a nursery governess, and I have recommended Miss Prior to him, at seventy guineas a year.'

'And pray who's the member of my college who will give my niece seventy guineas?' asks the Master, fiercely.

'You remember Lovel, the gentleman-pensioner?'

'The sugar-baking man—the man who took you out of ga——?'

'One good turn deserves another,' says I, hastily. 'I have done as much for some of your family, Sargent?'

The red Master, who had been rustling up and down his study in his gown and bands, stopped in his walk as if I had struck him. He looked at me. He turned redder than ever. He drew his hand over his eyes. 'Batchelor,' says he, 'I ask your pardon. It was I who forgot myself—may heaven forgive me!—forgot how good you have been to my family, to my—ahem!—*humble* family, and—and how devoutly thankful I ought to be for the protection which they have found in you.' His voice quite fell as he spoke; and of course any little wrath which I might have felt was disarmed before his contrition. We parted the best friends. He not only shook hands with me at the study-door, but he actually followed me to the hall-door, and shook hands at his lodge-porch, *sub Jove*, in the quadrangle. Huckles, the tutor (Highlow Huckles we used to call him in our time), and Botts (Trumperian



professor), who happened to be passing through the court at the time, stood aghast as they witnessed the phenomenon.

'I say, Batchelor,' asks Huckles, 'have you been made a marquis by any chance?'

'Why a marquis, Huckles?' I ask.

'Sargent never comes to his lodge-door with any man under a marquis,' says Huckles, in a low whisper.

'Or a pretty woman,' says that Botts (he *will* have his joke). 'Batchelor, my elderly Tiresias, are you turned into a lovely young lady *par hasard*?'

'Get along, you absurd Trumperian professor!' say I. But the circumstance was the talk not only in Computation Room that evening over our wine, but of the whole college. And further, events happened which made each man look at his neighbour with wonder. For that whole term Sargent did not ask our nobleman Lord Sackville (Lord Wigmore's son) to the lodge. (Lord W.'s father, you know, Duff, was baker to the college.) For that whole term he was rude but twice to Perks, the junior tutor, and then only in a very mild way: and what is more, he gave his niece a present of a gown, of his blessing, of a kiss, and a high character, when she went away;—and promised to put one of her young brothers to school—which promise, I need not say, he faithfully kept: for he has good principles, Sargent has. He is rude: he is ill-bred: he is *lumptious* beyond almost any man I ever knew: he is spoiled not a little by prosperity;—but he is magnanimous: he can own that he has been in the wrong; and, oh me! what a quantity of Greek he knows!

Although my late friend the Captain never seemed to do aught but spend the family money, his disreputable presence somehow acted for good in the household. 'My dear husband kept our family together,' Mrs. Prior said, shaking her lean head under her meagre widow's cap. 'Heaven knows how I shall provide for these lambs now he is gone.' Indeed, it was not until after the death of that tipsy shepherd that the wolves of the law came down upon the lambs—myself included, who have passed the age of lamblhood and mint sauce a long time. They came down upon our fold in Beak Street, I say, and ravaged it. What was I to do? Could I leave that widow and children in their distress? I was not ignorant of misfortune, and knew how to succour the miserable. Nay, I think the little excitement attendant upon the seizure of my goods, etc., the insolent vulgarity of the low persons in possession—with one of whom I was very near coming to a personal encounter—and other incidents which occurred in the



bereft household, served to rouse me, and dissipate some of the languor and misery under which I was suffering, in consequence of Miss Mulligan's conduct to me. I know I took the late Captain to his final abode. My good friends the printers of the *Museum* took one of his boys into their counting-house. A blue coat and a pair of yellow stockings were procured for Augustus; and seeing the Master's children walking about in Boniface gardens with a glum-looking old wretch of a nurse, I bethought me of proposing to him to take his niece Miss Prior—and, heaven be good to me! never said one word to her uncle about Miss Bellenden and the Academy. I daresay I drew a number of long bows about her. I managed about the bad grammar pretty well, by lamenting that Elizabeth's poor mother had been forced to allow the girl to keep company with ill-educated people: and added, that she could not fail to mend her English in the house of one of the most distinguished scholars in Europe, and one of the best-bred women. I did say so, upon my word, looking that half-bred, stuck-up Mrs. Sargent gravely in the face; and I humbly trust, if that bouncer has been registered against me, the Recording Angel will be pleased to consider that the motive was good, though the statement was unjustifiable. But I don't think it was the compliment: I think it was the temptation of getting a governess for next to nothing that operated upon Madam Sargent. And so Bessy went to her aunt, partook of the bread of dependence, and drank of the cup of humiliation, and ate the pie of humility, and brought up her odious little cousins to the best of her small power, and bowed the head of hypocrisy before the don her uncle, and the pompous little upstart her aunt. *She* the best-bred woman in England, indeed! *She*, the little vain skinflint!

Bessy's mother was not a little loth to part with the fifty pounds a year which the child brought home from the Academy; but her departure thence was inevitable. Some quarrel had taken place there, about which the girl did not care to talk. Some rudeness had been offered to Miss Bellenden, to which Miss Prior was determined not to submit: or was it that she wanted to go away from the scenes of her own misery, and to try and forget that Indian captain? Come, fellow-sufferer! Come, child of misfortune, come hither! Here is an old bachelor who will weep with thee tear for tear!

I protest here is Miss Prior coming into the room at last. A pale face, a tawny head of hair combed back, under a black cap: a pair of blue spectacles, as I live! a tight mourning dress, buttoned up to her white throat; a head hung meekly down:

such is Miss Prior. She takes my hand when I offer it. She drops me a demure little curtsey, and answers my many questions with humble monosyllabic replies. She appeals constantly to Lady Baker for instruction, or for confirmation of her statements. What! have six years of slavery so changed the frank daring young girl whom I remember in Beak Street? She is taller and stouter than she was. She is awkward and high-shouldered, but surely she has a very fine figure.

‘Will Miss Cissy and Master Popham have their teas here or in the schoolroom?’ asks Bedford, the butler, of his master. Miss Prior looks appealingly to Lady Baker.

‘In the sch——’ Lady Baker is beginning.

‘Here—here!’ bawl out the children. ‘Much better fun down here: and you’ll send us out some fruit and things from dinner, papa!’ cries Cissy.

‘It’s time to dress for dinner,’ says her ladyship.

‘Has the first bell rung?’ asks Lovel.

‘Yes, the first bell has rung, and grandmamma must go, for it always takes her a precious long time to dress for dinner!’ cries Pop. And, indeed, on looking at Lady Baker, the connoisseur might perceive that her ladyship was a highly composite person, whose charms required very much care and arrangement. There are some cracked old houses where the painters and plumbers and puttyers are always at work.

‘Have the goodness to ring the bell!’ she says, in a majestic manner, to Miss Prior, though I think Lady Baker herself was nearest.

I sprang towards the bell myself, and my hand meets Elizabeth’s there, who was obeying her ladyship’s summons, and who retreats, making me the demurest curtsey. At the summons, enter Bedford the butler (he was an old friend of mine, too) and young Buttons, the page under that butler.

Lady Baker points to a heap of articles on a table, and says to Bedford: ‘If you please, Bedford, tell my man to give those things to Pinhorn, my maid, to be taken to my room.’

‘Shall I not take them up, dear Lady Baker?’ says Miss Prior.

But Bedford, looking at his subordinate, says: ‘Thomas! tell Bulkeley, her ladyship’s man, to take her ladyship’s things and give them to her ladyship’s maid.’ There was a tone of sarcasm, even of parody, in Monsieur Bedford’s voice; but his manner was profoundly grave and respectful. Drawing up her person, and making a motion, I don’t know whether of politeness or defiance, exit Lady Baker, followed by page, bearing bandboxes, shawls,

paper parcels, parasols—I know not what. Dear Popham stands on his head as grandmamma leaves the room. ‘Don’t be vulgar!’ cries little Cissy (the dear child is always acting as a little Mentor to her brother). ‘I shall, if I like,’ says Pop; and he makes faces at her.

‘You know your room, Batch?’ asks the master of the house.

‘Mr. Batchelor’s old room—always has the blue room,’ says Bedford, looking very kindly at me.

‘Give us,’ cries Lovel, ‘a bottle of that Sau——’

‘——terne, Mr. Batchelor used to like. Château Yquem. All right!’ says Mr. Bedford. ‘How will you have the turbot done you brought down?—Dutch sauce?—Make lobster into salad? Mr. Bonnington likes lobster-salad,’ says Bedford. Pop is winding up the butler’s back at this time. It is evident Mr. Bedford is a privileged person in the family. As he had entered it on my nomination several years ago, and had been ever since the faithful valet, butler, and major-domo of Lovel, Bedford and I were always good friends when we met.

‘By the way, Bedford, why wasn’t the barouche sent for me to the bridge?’ cries Lovel. ‘I had to walk all the way home, with a bat and stumps for Pop, with the basket of fish, and that handbox with my lady’s——’

‘He—he!’ grins Bedford.

‘He—he! Confound you, why do you stand grinning there? Why didn’t I have the carriage, I say?’ bawls the master of the house.

‘You know, sir,’ says Bedford. ‘*She* had the carriage.’ And he indicated the door through which Lady Baker had just retreated.

‘Then why didn’t I have the phaeton?’ asks Bedford’s master.

‘Your Ma and Mr. Bonnington had the phaeton.’

‘And why shouldn’t they, pray? Mr. Bonnington is lame: I’m at my business all day. I should like to know why they *shouldn’t* have the phaeton?’ says Lovel, appealing to me. As we had been sitting talking together previous to Miss Prior’s appearance, Lady Baker had said to Lovel, ‘Your mother and Mr. Bonnington are coming to dinner *of course*, Frederick?’ and Lovel had said, ‘Of course they are,’ with a peevish bluster, whereof I now began to understand the meaning. The fact was, these two women were fighting for the possession of this child; but who was the Solomon to say which should have him? Not I. *Nenni*. I put my oar in no man’s boat. Give me an easy life, my dear friends, and row me gently over.

‘You had better go and dress,’ says Bedford, sternly, looking

at his master; 'the first bell has rung this quarter of an hour. Will you have some '34?'

Lovel started up; he looked at the clock. 'You are all ready, Batch, I see. I hope you are going to stay some time, ain't you?' And he disappeared to array himself in his sables and starch. I was thus alone with Miss Prior and her young charges, who resumed straightway their infantine gambols and quarrels.

'My dear Bessy!' I cry, holding out both hands, 'I am heartily glad to——'

'*Ne m'appellez que de nom paternel devant tout ce monde s'il vous plaît, mon cher ami, mon bon protecteur!*' she says, hastily, in very good French, folding her hands and making a curtsy.

'*Où, où, où! Parlez-vous Français? J'aime, tu aimes, il aime!*' cries out dear Master Popham. 'What are you talking about? Here's the phaeton!' and the young innocent dashes through the open window on to the lawn, whither he is followed by his sister, and where we see the carriage containing Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington rolling over the smooth walk.

Bessy advances towards me, and gives me readily enough now the hand she had refused anon.

'I never thought you would have refused it, Bessy,' said I.

'Refuse it to the best friend I ever had!' she says, pressing my hand. 'Ah, dear Mr. Batchelor, what an ungrateful wretch I should be, if I did!'

'Let me see your eyes. Why do you wear spectacles? You never wore them in Beak Street,' I say. You see I was very fond of the child. She had wound herself around me in a thousand fond ways. Owing to a certain Person's conduct my heart may be a ruin—a Persepolis, sir—a perfect Tadmor. But what then? May not a traveller rest under its shattered columns? May not an Arab maid repose there till the morning dawns and the caravan passes on? Yes, my heart is a Palmyra, and once a queen inhabited me (O Zenobia! Zenobia! to think thou shouldst have been led away captive by an O'D.!) Now, I am alone, alone in the solitary wilderness. Nevertheless, if a stranger comes to me I have a spring for his weary feet, I will give him the shelter of my shade. Rest thy cheek awhile, young maiden, on my marble—then go thy ways, and leave me.

This I thought, or something to this effect, as, in reply to my remark, 'Let me see your eyes,' Bessy took off her spectacles, and I took them up and looked at her. Why didn't I say to her, 'My dear brave Elizabeth! as I look in your face, I see you have had an awful deal of suffering. Your eyes are inscrutably sad. We who are initiated, know the members of our Community of

Sorrow. We have both been wrecked in different ships, and been cast on the shore. Let us go hand-in-hand, and find a cave and a shelter somewhere together.' I say, why didn't I say this to her? She would have come, I feel sure she would. We would have been semi-attached as it were. We would have locked up that room in either heart where the skeleton was, and said nothing about it, and pulled down the party-wall and taken our mild tea in the garden. I live in Pump Court now. It would have been better than this dingy loneliness and a snuffy laundress who bullies me. But for Bessy? Well—well, perhaps better for her too.

I remember these thoughts rushing through my mind whilst I held the spectacles. What a number of other things too? I remember two canaries making a tremendous concert in their cage. I remember the voices of the two children quarrelling on the lawn, the sound of the carriage-wheels grinding over the gravel; and then of a little old familiar cracked voice in my ear, with a 'La, Mr. Batchelor! are *you* here?' And a sly face looks up at me from under an old bonnet.

'It is mamma,' says Bessy.

'And I've come to tea with Elizabeth and the dear children; and while you are at dinner, dear Mr. Batchelor, thankful—thankful for all mercies! And, dear me! here is Mrs. Bonnington, I do declare! Dear madam, how well you look—not twenty, I declare. And dear Mr. Bonnington! Oh, sir! let me—let me, I must *press* your hand. What a sermon last Sunday! All Putney was in tears!'

And the little woman, flinging out her lean arms, seizes portly Mr. Bonnington's fat hand; as he and kind Mrs. Bonnington enter at the open casement. The little woman seems inclined to do the honours of the house. 'And won't you go upstairs, and put on your cap? Dear me, what a lovely ribbon! How blue does become Mrs. Bonnington! I always say so to Elizabeth,' she cries, peeping into a little packet which Mrs. Bonnington bears in her hand. After exchanging friendly words and greetings with me, that lady retires to put the lovely cap on, followed by her little jackal of an aide-de-camp. The portly clergyman surveys his pleased person in the spacious mirror. 'Your things are in your old room—like to go in and brush up a bit?' whispers Bedford to me. I am obliged to go, you see, though, for my part, I had thought, until Bedford spoke, that the ride on the top of the Putney omnibus had left me without any need of brushing; having aired my clothes, and given my young cheeks a fresh and agreeable bloom.





BESSY'S SPECTACLES.



My old room, as Bedford calls it, was that snug apartment communicating by double doors with the drawing-room, and whence you can walk on to the lawn out of the windows.

‘Here’s your books, here’s your writing-paper,’ says Bedford, leading the way into the chamber. ‘Does sore eyes good to see *you* down here again, sir. You may smoke now. Clarence Baker smokes when he comes. Go and get some of that wine you like for dinner.’ And the good fellow’s eyes beam kindness upon me as he nods his head, and departs to superintend the duties of his table. Of course you understand that this Bedford was my young printer’s boy of former days. What a queer fellow ! I had not only been kind to him, but he was grateful.

## CHAPTER III.

### IN WHICH I PLAY THE SPY.



THE room to which Bedford conducted me I hold to be the very pleasantest chamber in all the mansion of Shrublands. To lie on that comfortable, cool bachelor's bed there, and see the birds hopping about on the lawn; to peep out of the French window at early morning, inhale the sweet air, mark the dewy bloom on the grass, listen to the little warblers performing their chorus, step forth in your dressing-gown and slippers, pick a straw-

berry from the bed, or an apricot in its season; blow one, two, three, just half-a-dozen puffs of a cigarette, hear the venerable towers of Putney toll the hour of six (three hours from breakfast, by consequence), and pop back into bed again with a favourite novel, or review, to set you off (you see I am not malicious, or I could easily insert here the name of some twaddler against whom I have a grudgekin): to pop back into bed again, I say, with a book which sets you off into that dear invaluable second sleep, by which health, spirits, appetite are so prodigiously improved:—all these I hold to be most cheerful and harmless pleasures, and have partaken of them often at Shrublands with a grateful heart. That heart may have had its griefs, but is yet susceptible of enjoyment and consolation. That bosom may have been lacerated; but is not therefore and henceforward a stranger to comfort.

After a certain affair in Dublin—nay, very soon after, three months after—I recollect remarking to myself: ‘Well, thank my stars, I still have a relish for ’34 claret.’ Once at Shrublands, I heard steps pacing overhead at night, and the feeble but continued wail of an infant. I wakened from my sleep, was sulky, but turned and slept again. Biddlecombe the barrister I knew was the occupant of the upper chamber. He came down the next morning looking wretchedly yellow about the cheeks, and livid round the eyes. His teething infant had kept him on the march all night, and Mrs. Biddlecome, I am told, scolds him frightfully besides. He munched a shred of toast, and was off by the omnibus to chambers. I chipped a second egg; I may have tried one or two other nice little things on the table (Strasbourg *pâté* I know I never can resist, and am convinced it is perfectly wholesome). I could see my own sweet face in the mirror opposite, and my gills were as rosy as any boiled salmon. ‘Well, well!’ I thought, as the barrister disappeared on the roof of the coach, ‘he has *domus* and *placens uxor*—but is she *placens*? *Placetne* to walk about all night with a roaring baby? Is it pleasing to go to bed after a long hard day’s work, and have your wife nag-nagging you because she has not been invited to the Lady Chancelloress’s *soirée*, or what not? Suppose the Glorvina whom you loved so had been yours? Her eyebrows looked as if they could scowl; her eyes as if they could flash with anger. Remember what a slap she gave the little knife-boy for upsetting the butter-boat over her tabinet. Suppose *parvulus aulá*, a little Batchelor, your son, who had the toothache all night in your bedroom?’ These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind as I helped myself to the comfortable meal before me. ‘I say, what a lot of muffins you’re eating!’ cried innocent Master Lovel. Now the married, the wealthy, the prosperous Biddlecombe only took his wretched scrap of dry toast. ‘Aha!’ you say, ‘this man is consoling himself after his misfortune.’ O churl! and do you grudge me consolation? ‘Thank you, dear Miss Prior. Another cup, and plenty of cream, if you please.’ Of course, Lady Baker was not at table when I said, ‘Dear Miss Prior,’ at breakfast. Before her ladyship I was as mum as a mouse. Elizabeth found occasion to whisper to me during the day in her demure way: ‘This is a very rare occasion. Lady B. never allows me to breakfast alone with Mr. Lovel, but has taken her extra nap, I suppose, because you and Mr. and Mrs. Biddlecombe were here.’

Now it may be that one of the double doors of the room which I inhabited was occasionally open, and that Mr. Batchelor’s eyes

and ears are uncommonly quick, and note a number of things which less observant persons would never regard or discover ; but out of this room, which I occupied for some few days, now and subsequently, I looked out as from a little ambush upon the proceedings of the house, and got a queer little insight into the history and character of the personages round about me. The two grandmothers of Lovel's children were domineering over that easy gentleman, as women—not grandmothers merely, but sisters, wives, aunts, daughters, when the chance is given them—will domineer. Ah ! Glorvina, what a grey mare you might have become had you chosen Mr. Batchelor for your consort ! (But this I only remark with a parenthetic sigh.) The two children had taken each the side of a grandmamma, and whilst Master Pop was declared by his maternal grandmother to be a Baker all over, and taught to despise sugar-baking and trade, little Cecilia was Mrs. Bonnington's favourite, repeated Watts's hymns with fervent precocity ; declared that she would marry none but a clergyman ; preached infantine sermons to her brother and maid about worldliness ; and somewhat wearied me, if the truth must be told, by the intense self-respect with which she regarded her own virtues. The old ladies had that love for each other which one may imagine that their relative positions would engender. Over the bleeding and helpless bodies of Lovel and his worthy and kind stepfather, Mr. Bonnington, they skirmished and fired shots at each other. Lady B. would give hints about second marriages, and second families, and so forth, which of course made Mrs. Bonnington wince. Mrs. B. had the better of Lady Baker, in consequence of the latter's notorious pecuniary irregularities. *She* had never had recourse to her son's purse, she could thank Heaven. She was not afraid of meeting any tradesman in Putney or London ; she had never been ordered out of the house in the late Cecilia's lifetime ; *she* could go to Boulogne and enjoy the *fresh air* there. This was the terrific whip she had over Baker. Lady B., I regret to say, in consequence of the failure of remittances, had been locked up in prison, just at a time when she was in a state of violent quarrel with her late daughter, and good Mr. Bonnington had helped her out of durance. How did I know this ? Bedford, Lovel's factotum, told me : and how the old ladies were fighting like two cats.

There was one point on which the two ladies agreed. A very wealthy widower, young still, good-looking, and good-tempered, we know can sometimes find a dear woman to console his loneliness, and protect his motherless children. From the neighbouring Heath, from Wimbledon, Roehampton, Barnes, Mortlake, Richmond, Esher, Walton, Windsor, nay, Reading, Bath, Exeter, and

Penzance itself, or from any other quarter of Britain, over which your fancy may please to travel, families would have come ready with dear young girls to take charge of that man's future happiness: but it is a fact that these two dragons kept all women off from their ward. An unmarried woman, with decent good looks, was scarce ever allowed to enter Shrublands gate. If such an one appeared, Lovel's two mothers sallied out and crunched her hapless bones. Once or twice he dared to dine with his neighbours, but the ladies led him such a life that the poor creature gave up the practice, and faintly announced his preference for home. 'My dear Batch,' says he, 'what do I care for the dinners of the people round about? Has any one of them got a better cook or better wine than mine? When I come home from business, it is an intolerable nuisance to have to dress and go out seven or eight miles to cold *entrées*, and loaded claret, and sweet port. I can't stand it, sir. I *won't* stand it' (and he stamps his foot in a resolute manner). 'Give me an easy life, a wine-merchant I can trust, and my own friends, by my own fireside. Shall we have some more? We can manage another bottle between us three, Mr. Bonnington?'

'Well,' says Mr. Bonnington, winking at the ruby goblet, 'I am sure I have no objection, Frederick, to another bo——'

'Coffee is served, sir,' cries Bedford, entering.

'Well—well, perhaps we have had enough,' says worthy Bonnington.

'We *have* had enough, we all drink too much,' says Lovel, briskly. 'Come in to coffee?'

We go to the drawing-room. Fred and I, and the two ladies, sit down to a rubber, whilst Miss Prior plays a piece of Beethoven to a slight warbling accompaniment from Mr. Bonnington's handsome nose, who has fallen asleep over the newspaper. During our play, Bessy glides out of the room—a grey shadow. Bonnington wakens up when the tray is brought in. Lady Baker likes that good old custom: it was always the fashion at the Castle, and she takes a good glass of negus too; and so do we all; and the conversation is pretty merry, and Fred Lovel hopes I shall sleep better to-night, and is very facetious about poor Biddlecombe, and the way in which that eminent Q.C. is henpecked by his wife.

From my bachelor's room, then, on the ground-floor; or from my solitary walks in the garden, whence I could oversee many things in the house; or from Bedford's communications to me, which were very friendly, curious, and unreserved; or from my own observation, which I promise you can see as far into the mill-stones of life as most folks', I grew to find the mysteries of

Shrublands no longer mysterious to me ; and like another *Diable Boiteux*, had the roofs of a pretty number of the Shrublands rooms taken off for me.

For instance, on that very first day of my stay, whilst the family were attiring themselves for dinner, I chanced to find two secret cupboards of the house unlocked, and the contents unveiled to me. Pinhorn, the children's maid, a giddy little flirting thing in a pink ribbon, brought some articles of the toilette into my worship's apartment, and as she retired did not shut the door behind her. I might have thought that pert little head had never been made to ache by any care ; but ah ! black care sits behind the horseman, as Horace remarks, and not only behind the horseman, but behind the footman ; and not only on the footman, but on the buxom shoulders of the lady's-maid. So with Pinhorn. You surely have remarked respecting domestic servants that they address you in a tone utterly affected and unnatural—adopting, when they are amongst each other, voices and gestures entirely different to those which their employers see and hear. Now, this little Pinhorn, in her occasional intercourse with your humble servant, had a brisk, quick, fluttering toss of the head, and a frisky manner, no doubt capable of charming some persons. As for me, ancillary allurements have, I own, had but small temptations. If Venus brought me a bedroom candle, and a jug of hot water—I should give her sixpence, and no more. Having, you see, given my all to one wom—— Psha ! never mind *that* old story.—Well, I daresay this little creature may have been a flirt but I took no more notice of her than if she had been a coal-scuttle.

Now, suppose she *was* a flirt. Suppose, under a mask of levity, she hid a profound sorrow. Do you suppose she was the first woman who ever has done so ? Do you suppose because she has fifteen pounds a year, her tea, sugar, and beer, and told fibs to her masters and mistresses, she had not a heart ? She went out of the room, absolutely coaxing and leering at me as she departed, with a great counterpane over her arm ; but in the next apartment I heard her voice quite changed, and another changed voice too—though not so much altered—interrogating her. My friend Dick Bedford's voice, in addressing those whom Fortune had pleased to make his superiors, was gruff and brief. He seemed to be anxious to deliver himself of his speech to you as quickly as possible ; and his tone always seemed to hint, 'There—there is my message, and I have delivered it ; but you know perfectly well that I am as good as you.' And so he was, and so I always admitted ; so even the trembling, believing, flustering, suspicious



Lady Baker herself admitted, when she came into communication with this man. I have thought of this little Dick as of Swift at Sheen hard by, with Sir William Temple: or Spartacus when he was as yet the servant of the fortunate Roman gentleman who owned him. Now if Dick was intelligent, obedient, useful, only not rebellious, with his superiors, I should fancy that amongst his equals he was by no means pleasant company, and that most of them hated him for his arrogance, his honesty, and his scorn of them all.

But women do not always hate a man for scorning and despising them. Women do not revolt at the rudeness and arrogance of us, their natural superiors. Women, if properly trained, come down to heel at the master's bidding, and lick the hand that has been often raised to hit them. I do not say the brave little Dick Bedford ever raised an actual hand to this poor serving-girl, but his tongue whipped her, his behaviour trampled on her, and she cried, and came to him whenever he lifted a finger. Psha! Don't tell *me*. If you want a quiet, contented, orderly home, and things comfortable about you, that is the way you must manage your women.

Well, Bedford happens to be in the next room. It is the morning-room at Shrublands. You enter the dining-room from it, and they are in the habit of laying out the dessert there, before taking it in for dinner. Bedford is laying out his dessert as Pinhorn enters from my chamber, and he begins upon her with a sarcastic sort of grunt, and a 'Ho! suppose you've been making up to B., have you?'

'Oh, Mr. Bedford, *you* know very well who it is I cares for!'

says she with a sigh.

'Bother!'

Mr. B. remarks.

'Well, Richard then!'

(here she weeps).

'Leave go my 'and!—leave go my a-hand, I say!'

(What *could* she have been doing to cause this exclamation?)

'Oh, Richard, it's not your 'and I want—it's your ah-ah-art, Richard!'

'Mary Pinhorn,' exclaims the other, 'what's the use of going on with this game? You know we couldn't be a-happy together—you know your ideers ain't no good, Mary. It ain't your fault. I don't blame you for it, my dear. Some people are born clever, some are born tall; I ain't tall.'

'Oh, you're tall enough for me, Richard!'

Here Richard again found occasion to cry out: '*Don't*, I say! Suppose Baker was to come in and find you squeezing of my hand in this way? I say, some people are born with big brains, Miss Pinhorn, and some with big figures. Look at that ass Bulkeley,

Lady B.'s man! He is as big as a Life-guardsmen, and he has no more education, nor no more ideas, than the beef he feeds on.'

'La! Richard, whatever do you mean?'

'Pooh! How should *you* know what I mean? Lay them books straight. Put the volumes together, stupid! and the papers, and get the table ready for nussery tea, and don't go there mopping your eyes and making a fool of yourself, Mary Pinhorn!'

'Oh, your heart is a stone—a stone—a stone!' cries Mary, in a burst of tears. 'And I wish it was hung round my neck, and I was at the bottom of the well, and—there's the hupstairs bell!' with which signal, I suppose, Mary disappeared, for I only heard a sort of grunt from Mr. Bedford; then the clatter of a dish or two, the wheeling of chairs and furniture, and then came a brief silence, which lasted until the entry of Dick's subordinate Buttons, who laid the table for the children's and Miss Prior's tea.

So here was an old story told over again. Here was love unrequited, and a little passionate heart wounded and unhappy. My poor little Mary! As I am a sinner, I will give thee a crown when I go away, and not a couple of shillings, as my wont has been. Five shillings will not console thee much, but they will console thee a little. Thou wilt not imagine that I bribe thee with any privy thought of evil? Away! *Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück—ich habe—geliebt!*

At this juncture I suppose Mrs. Prior must have entered the apartment, for though I could not hear her noiseless step, her little cracked voice came pretty clearly to me with a 'Good afternoon, Mr. Bedford! Oh, dear me! what a many—many years we have been acquainted. To think of the pretty little printer's boy who used to come to Mr. Batchelor, and see you grown such a fine man!'

*Bedford.* 'How? I'm only five foot four.'

*Mrs. Prior.* 'But such a fine figure, Bedford! You are—now indeed you are! Well, you are strong and I am weak. You are well, and I am weary and faint.'

*Bedford.* 'The tea's a-coming directly, Mrs. Prior.'

*Mrs. P.* 'Could you give me a glass of water first—and perhaps a little sherry in it, please. Oh, thank you. How good it is! How it revives a poor old wretch!—And your cough, Bedford? How is your cough? I have brought you some lozenges for it—some of Sir Henry Halford's own prescribing for my dear husband, and——'

*Bedford (abruptly).* 'I must go—never mind the cough now, Mrs. P.'

*Mrs. P.* 'What's here? almonds and raisins, macaroons, preserved



‘WHERE THE SUGAR GOES.’

apricots, biscuits for dessert—and—la bless the man! how you sta-artled me!’

*Bedford.* ‘DON’T! Mrs. Prior: I beg and implore of you, keep your ’ands out of the dessert. I can’t stand it. I *must* tell the governor if this game goes on.’

*Mrs. P.* ‘Ah! Mr. Bedford, it is for my poor—poor child at home: the doctor recommended her apricots. Ay, indeed, dear Bedford; he did, for her poor chest!’

*Bedford.* ‘And I’m blest if you haven’t been at the sherry bottle again! Oh, Mrs. P., you drive me wild—you do. I can’t see Lovel put upon in this way. You know it’s only last week I whopped the boy for stealing the sherry, and ’twas you done it.’

*Mrs. P. (passionately).* ‘For a sick child, Bedford. What won’t a mother do for her sick child?’

*Bedford.* ‘Your children’s always sick. You’re always taking things for ’em. I tell you, by the laws, I won’t and mustn’t stand it, Mrs. P.’

*Mrs. P. (with much spirit).* ‘Go and tell your master, Bedford! Go and tell tales of me, sir. Go and have me dismissed out of this house. Go and have my daughter dismissed out of this house, and her poor mother brought to disgrace!’

*Bedford.* ‘Mrs. Prior—Mrs. Prior! you *have* been a-taking the sherry. A glass I don’t mind: but you’ve been a-bringing that bottle again.’

*Mrs. P. (whimpering).* ‘It’s for Charlotte, Bedford! my poor delicate angel of a Shatty! she’s ordered it, indeed she is!’

*Bedford.* ‘Confound your Shatty! I can’t stand it, I mustn’t, and won’t, Mrs. P.’

Here a noise and clatter of other persons arriving interrupted the conversation between Lovel’s major-domo and the mother of the children’s governess, and I presently heard Master Pop’s voice saying: ‘You’re going to tea with us, Mrs. Prior.’

*Mrs. P.* ‘Your kind dear grandmamas have asked me, dear Master Popham.’

*Pop.* ‘But you’d like to go to dinner best, wouldn’t you? I daresay you have doosid bad dinners at your house. Haven’t you, Mrs. Prior?’

*Cissy.* ‘Don’t say doosid. It’s a naughty word, Popham!’

*Pop.* ‘I *will* say doosid. Doo-oo-oosid! There! and I’ll say worse words too, if I please, and you hold *your* tongue. What’s there for tea? Jam for tea? strawberries for tea? muffins for tea? That’s it: strawberries and muffins for tea! And we’ll go into dessert besides: that’s prime. I say, Miss Prior!’

*Miss Prior.* ‘What do you say, Popham?’

*Pop.* 'Shouldn't you like to go into dessert?—there's lots of good things there and have wine? Only when grandmamma tells her story about—about my grandfather and King George the what-d'ye-call-'em : King George the Fourth ——'

*Cis.* 'Ascended the throne 1820 ; died at Windsor 1830.'

*Pop.* 'Bother Windsor ! Well, when she tells that story, I can tell you *that* ain't very good fun.'

*Cis.* 'And it's rude of you to speak in that way of your grandmamma, Pop.'

*Pop.* 'And you'll hold *your* tongue, miss ! And I shall speak as I like. And I'm a man, and I don't want any of your stuff and nonsense. I say, Mary, give us the marmalade !'

*Cis.* 'You have had plenty to eat, and boys oughtn't to have so much.'

*Pop.* 'Boys may have what they like. Boys can eat twice as much as women. There, I don't want any more. Anybody may have the rest.'

*Mrs. P.* 'What nice marmalade ! I know some children, my dears, who ——'

*Miss P. (imploringly).* 'Mamma, I beseech you——'

*Mrs. P.* 'I know three dear children who very—very seldom have nice marmalade and delicious cake.'

*Pop.* 'I know whom you mean : you mean Augustus, and Frederick, and Fanny—your children. Well, they shall have marmalade and cake.'

*Cis.* 'Oh yes, I will give them all mine.'

*Pop. (who speaks, I think, as if his mouth was full).* 'I won't give 'em mine : but they can have another pot, you know. You have always got a basket with you ; you know you have, Mrs. Prior. You had it the day you took the cold fowl !'

*Mrs. P.* 'For the poor blind black man ! Oh, how thankful he was to his dear young benefactors ! He is a man and a brother, and to help him was most kind of you, dear Master Popham !'

*Pop.* 'That black beggar my brother ? He ain't my brother !'

*Mrs. P.* 'No, dears, you have both the most lovely complexions in the world.'

*Pop.* 'Bother complexions ! I say, Mary, another pot of marmalade.'

*Mary.* 'I don't know, Master Pop——'

*Pop.* 'I *will* have it, I say. If you don't, I'll smash everything, I will.'

*Cis.* 'Oh, you naughty, rude boy !'

*Pop.* 'Hold your tongue, stupid ! I will have it, I say.'



*Mrs. P.* 'Do humour him, Mary, please. And I'm sure my dear children at home will be better for it.'

*Pop.* 'There's your basket. Now put this cake in, and this bit of butter, and this sugar on the top of the butter. Hurray! hurray! Oh, what jolly fun! Here's some cake—no, I think I'll keep that; and, Mrs. Prior, tell Gus, and Fanny, and Fred, I sent it to 'em, and they shall never want for anything as long as Frederick Popham Baker Lovel, Esquire, can give it them. Did Gus like my grey greatcoat that I didn't want?'

*Miss P.* 'You did not give him your new greatcoat?'

*Pop.* 'It was beastly ugly, and I did give it him; and I'll give him this if I choose. And don't you speak to me; I'm going to school, and I ain't going to have no governesses soon.'

*Mrs. P.* 'Ah, dear child! what a nice coat it is; and how well my poor boy looks in it!'

*Miss P.* 'Mother, mother! I implore you—mother——!'

*Mr. Lovel enters.* 'So the children are at high tea! How d'ye do, Mrs. Prior? I think we shall be able to manage that little matter for your second boy, Mrs. Prior.'

*Mrs. P.* 'Heaven bless you—bless you, my dear, kind benefactor! Don't prevent me, Elizabeth: I *must* kiss his hand. There!'

And here the second bell rings, and I enter the morning-room, and can see Mrs. Prior's great basket popped cunningly under the table-cloth. Her basket?—her *porte-manteau*, her *porte-bouteille*, her *porte-gâteau*, her *porte-pantalon*, her *porte-butin* in general. Thus I could see that every day Mrs. Prior visited Shrublands she gleaned greedily of the harvest. Well, Boaz was rich, and this ruthless Ruth was hungry and poor.

At the welcome summons of the second bell, Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington also made their appearance; the latter in the new cap which Mrs. Prior had admired, and which she saluted with a nod of smiling recognition: 'Dear madam, it *is* lovely—I told you it was,' whispers Mrs. P., and the wearer of the blue ribbons turned her bonny, good-natured face towards the looking-glass, and I hope saw no reason to doubt Mrs. Prior's sincerity. As for Bonnington, I could perceive that he had been taking a little nap before dinner,—a practice by which the appetite is improved, I think, and the intellect prepared for the bland prandial conversation.

'Have the children been quite good?' asks papa, of the governess.

'There are worse children, sir,' says Miss Prior, meekly.



'Make haste and have your dinner; we are coming in to dessert!' cries Pop.

'You would not have us go to dine without your grandmother?' papa asks. Dine without Lady Baker, indeed! I should have liked to see him go to dinner without Lady Baker.

Pending her ladyship's arrival, papa and Mr. Bonnington walk to the open window, and gaze on the lawn and the towers of Putney rising over the wall.

'Ah, my good Mrs. Prior,' cries Mrs. Bonnington, 'those grandchildren of mine are sadly spoiled.'

'Not by *you*, dear madam,' says Mrs. Prior, with a look of commiseration. 'Your dear children at home are, I am sure, perfect models of goodness. Is Master Edward well, ma'am? and Master Robert, and Master Richard, and dear, funny little Master William? Ah, what blessings those children are to you! If a certain wilful little nephew of theirs took after them!'

'The little naughty wretch!' cried Mrs. Bonnington; 'do you know, Prior, my grandson Frederick—(I don't know why they call him Popham in this house, or why he should be ashamed of his father's name)—do you know that Popham spilt the ink over my dear husband's bands, which he keeps in his great dictionary, and fought with my Richard, who is three years older than Popham, and actually beat his own uncle!'

'Gracious goodness!' I cried; 'you don't mean to say, ma'am, that Pop has been laying violent hands upon his venerable relative?' I feel ever so gentle a pull at my coat. Was it Miss Prior who warned me not to indulge in the sarcastic method with good Mrs. Bonnington?

'I don't know why you call my poor child a venerable relative,' Mrs. B. remarks. 'I know that Popham was very rude to him; and then Robert came to his brother, and that graceless little Popham took a stick, and my husband came out, and do you know Popham Lovel actually kicked Mr. Bonnington on the shins, and butted him like a little naughty ram; and if you think such conduct is a subject for ridicule—I *don't*, Mr. Batchelor!'

'My dear—dear lady!' I cried, seizing her hand; for she was going to cry, and in woman's eye the unanswerable tear always raises a deuce of a commotion in my mind. 'I would not for the world say a word that should willingly vex you; and as for Popham, I give you my honour, I think nothing would do that child so much good as a good whipping.'

'He is spoiled, madam; we know by *whom*,' says Mrs. Prior. 'Dear Lady Baker! how that red does become your ladyship.' In fact, Lady B. sailed in at this juncture, arrayed in ribbons of

scarlet ; with many brooches, bangles, and other gimcracks ornamenting her plenteous person. And now her ladyship having arrived, Bedford announced that dinner was served, and Lovel gave his mother-in-law an arm, whilst I offered mine to Mrs. Bonnington to lead her to the adjoining dining-room. And the pacable, kind soul speedily made peace with me. And we ate and drank of Lovel's best. And Lady Baker told us her celebrated anecdote of George the Fourth's compliment to her late dear husband, Sir George, when his Majesty visited Ireland. Mrs. Prior and her basket were gone when we repaired to the drawing-room : having been hunting all day, the hungry mother had returned with her prey to her wide-mouthed birdikins. Elizabeth looked very pale and handsome, reading at her lamp. And whist and the little tray finished the second day at Shrublands.

I paced the moonlit walk alone when the family had gone to rest ; and smoked my cigar under the tranquil stars. I had been some thirty hours in the house, and what a queer little drama was unfolding itself before me ! What struggles and passions were going on here—what *certamina* and *motus animorum*. Here was Lovel, this willing horse ; and what a crowd of relations, what a heap of luggage had the honest fellow to carry ! How that little Mrs. Prior was working, and scheming, and tacking, and flattering, and fawning, and plundering, to be sure ! And that serene Elizabeth, with what consummate skill, art, and prudence had she to act, to keep her place with two such rivals reigning over her. And Elizabeth not only kept her place, but she actually was liked by those two women ! Why, Elizabeth Prior, my wonder and respect for thee increase with every hour during which I contemplate thy character ! How is it that you live with those lionesses, and are not torn to pieces ? What sops of flattery do you cast to them to appease them ? Perhaps I do not think my Elizabeth brings up her two children very well, and, indeed, have seldom become acquainted with young people more odious. But is the fault hers, or is it Fortune's spite ? How, with these two grandmothers spoiling the children alternately, can the governess do better than she does ? How has she managed to lull their natural jealousy ? I will work out that intricate problem, that I will, ere many days are over. And there are other mysteries which I perceive. There is poor Mary breaking her heart for the butler. That butler, why does he connive at the rogueries of Mrs. Prior ? Ha ! herein lies a mystery, too ; and I vow I will penetrate it ere long. So saying, I fling away the butt-end of the fragrant companion of my solitude,

and enter into my room by the open French window just as Bedford walks in at the door. I had heard the voice of that worthy domestic warbling a grave melody from his pantry window as I paced the lawn. When the family goes to rest, Bedford passes a couple of hours in study in his pantry, perusing the newspapers and the new works, and forming his opinion on books and politics. Indeed I have reason to believe that the letters in *The Putney Herald and Mortlake Monitor*, signed 'A Voice from the Basement,' were Mr. Bedford's composition.

'Come to see all safe for the night, sir, and the windows closed before you turn in,' Mr. Dick remarks. 'Best not leave 'em open, even if you are asleep inside—catch cold—many bad people about. Remember Bromley murder!—Enter at French windows—you cry out—cut your throat—and there's a fine paragraph for papers next morning.'

'What a good voice you have, Bedford,' I say; 'I heard you warbling just now—a famous bass, on my word!'

'Always fond of music—sing when I'm cleaning my plate—learned in old Beak Street. *She* used to teach me,' and he points towards the upper floors.

'What a little chap you were then!—when you came for my proofs for *The Museum*,' I remark.

'I ain't a very big one now, sir; but it ain't the big ones that do the best work,' remarked the butler.

'I remember Miss Prior saying that you were as old as she was.'

'H'm! and I scarce came up to her—eh-elbow.' (Bedford had constantly to do battle with the aspirates. He conquered them, but you could see there was a struggle.)

'And it was Miss Prior taught you to sing?' I say, looking him full in the face.

He dropped his eyes—he could not bear my scrutiny. I knew the whole story now.

'When Mrs. Lovel died at Naples,—Miss Prior brought home the children, and you acted as courier to the whole party?'

'Yes, sir,' says Bedford. 'We had the carriage, and of course poor Mrs. L. was sent home by sea, and I brought home the young ones, and—and the rest of the family. I could say *Avanti! avanti!* to the Italian postilions, and ask for *des chevaux* when we crossed the Halps—the Alps—I beg your pardon, sir.'

'And you used to see the party to their rooms at the inns, and call them up in the morning, and you had a blunderbuss in the rumble to shoot the robbers?'

‘Yes,’ says Bedford.

‘And it was a pleasant time?’

‘Yes,’ says Bedford, groaning and hanging down his miserable head. ‘Oh yes, it was a pleasant time.’

He turned away; he stamped his foot; he gave a sort of imprecation; he pretended to look at some books, and dust them with a napkin which he carried. I saw the matter at once. ‘Poor Dick!’ says I.

‘It’s the old—old story,’ says Dick. ‘It’s you and the Irish girl over again, sir. I’m only a servant, I know; but I’m a—— Confound it!’ And here he stuck his fists into his eyes.

‘And this is the reason you allow old Mrs. Prior to steal the sherry and the sugar?’ I ask.

‘How do you know that? you remember how she prigged in Beak Street?’ asks Bedford, fiercely.

‘I overheard you and her just before dinner,’ I said.

‘You had better go and tell Lovel—have me turned out of the house. That’s the best thing that can be done,’ cries Bedford again, fiercely, stamping his feet.

‘It is always my custom to do as much mischief as I possibly can, Dick Bedford,’ I say, with fine irony.

He seizes my hand. ‘No, you’re a trump—everybody knows that; beg pardon, sir; but you see I’m so—so—dash!—miserable, that I hardly know whether I’m walking on my head or my heels!’

‘You haven’t succeeded in touching her heart, then, my poor Dick?’ I said.

Dick shook his head. ‘She has no heart,’ he said. ‘If she ever had any, that fellar in India took it away with him. She don’t care for anybody alive. She likes me as well as any one. I think she appreciates me, you see, sir; she can’t ’elp it—I’m blest if she can. She knows I am a better man than most of the chaps that come down here,—I am, if I wasn’t a servant. If I were only an apothecary—like that grinning jackass who comes here from Barnes in his gig, and wants to marry her—she’d have me. She keeps him on, and encourages him—she can do that cleverly enough. And the old dragon fancies she is fond of him. Psha! Why am I making a fool of myself?—I am only a servant. Mary’s good enough for me; *she’ll* have me fast enough. I beg your pardon, sir; I am making a fool of myself; I ain’t the first, sir. Good-night, sir; hope you’ll sleep well.’ And Dick departs to his pantry and his private cares, and I think, ‘Here is another victim who is writhing under the merciless arrows of the universal torturer.’

'He is a very singular person,' Miss Prior remarked to me, as, next day, I happened to be walking on Putney Heath by her side, while her young charges trotted on and quarrelled in the distance. 'I wonder where the world will stop next, dear Mr. Batchelor, and how far the march of intellect will proceed! Any one so free, and easy, and cool as this Mr. Bedford I never saw. When we were abroad with poor Mrs. Lovel, he picked up French and Italian in quite a surprising way. He takes books down from the library now: the most abstruse works—works that *I* couldn't pretend to read, I'm sure. Mr. Bonnington says he has taught himself history, and Horace in Latin, and algebra, and I don't know what besides. He talked to the servants and tradespeople at Naples much better than *I* could, I assure you.' And Elizabeth tosses up her head heavenwards, as if she would ask of yonder skies how such a man could possibly be as good as herself.

She stepped along the Heath—slim, stately, healthy, tall—her firm, neat foot treading swiftly over the grass. She wore her blue spectacles, but I think she could have looked at the sun without the glasses and without wincing. That sun was playing with her tawny, wavy ringlets, and scattering gold-dust over them.

'It is wonderful,' said I, admiring her, 'how these people give themselves airs, and try to imitate their betters!'

'Most extraordinary!' says Bessy. She had not one particle of humour in all her composition. I think Dick Bedford was right; and she had no heart. Well, she had famous lungs, health, appetite, and with these one may get through life not uncomfortably.

'You and Saint Cecilia got on pretty well, Bessy?' I ask.

'Saint who?'

'The late Mrs. L.'

'Oh, Mrs. Lovel—yes. What an odd person you are! I did not understand whom you meant,' says Elizabeth the downright.

'Not a good temper, I should think? She and Fred fought?'

'*He* never fought.'

'I think a little bird has told me that she was not averse to the admiration of our sex?'

'I don't speak ill of my friends, Mr. Batchelor,' replies Elizabeth the prudent.

'You must have difficult work with the two old ladies at Shrublands?'

Bessy shrugs her shoulders. 'A little management is necessary in all families,' she says. 'The ladies are naturally a little jealous one of the other; but they are both of them not unkind to me



in the main; and I have to bear no more than other women in my situation. It was not all pleasure at St. Boniface, Mr. Batchelor, with my uncle and aunt. I suppose all governesses have their difficulties; and I must get over mine as best I can, and be thankful for the liberal salary which your kindness procured for me, and which enables me to help my poor mother and my brothers and sisters.'

'I suppose you give all your money to her?'

'Nearly all. They must have it; poor mamma has so many mouths to feed.'

'And *notre petit cœur*, Bessy?' I ask, looking in her fresh face.

'Have we replaced the Indian officer?'

Another shrug of the shoulders. 'I suppose we all get over those follies, Mr. Batchelor. I remember somebody else was in a sad way too,'—and she looks askance at the victim of Glorvina. 'My folly is dead and buried long ago. I have to work so hard for mamma, and my brothers and sisters, that I have no time for such nonsense.'

Here a gentleman in a natty gig, with a high-trotting horse, came spanking towards us over the common, and with my profound knowledge of human nature, I saw at once that the servant by the driver's side was a little doctor's boy, and the gentleman himself was a neat and trim general practitioner.

He stared at me grimly, as he made a bow to Miss Bessy. I saw jealousy and suspicion in his aspect.

'Thank you, dear Mr. Drencher,' says Bessy, 'for your kindness to mamma and our children. You are going to call at Shrublands? Lady Baker was indisposed this morning. She says when she can't have Dr. Piper there's nobody like you.' And this artful one smiles blandly on Mr. Drencher.

'I have got the workhouse, and a case at Roehampton, and I shall be at Shrublands *about two*, Miss Prior,' says that young doctor, whom Bedford had called a grinning jackass. He laid an eager emphasis on the *two*. Go to! I know what two and two mean as well as most people, Mr. Drencher! Glances of rage he shot at me from out his gig. The serpents of that miserable Æsculapius unwound themselves from his rod, and were gnawing at his swollen heart!

'He has a good practice, Mr. Drencher?' I ask, sly rogue as I am.

'He is very good to mamma and our children. His practice with *them* does not profit him much,' says Bessy.

'And I suppose our walk will be over before two o'clock?' remarks that slyboots who is walking with Miss Prior.



'I hope so. Why, it is our dinner-time; and this walk on the Heath does make one so hungry!' cries the governess.

'Bessy Prior,' I said, 'it is my belief that you no more want spectacles than a cat in the twilight.' To which she replied, that I was such a strange, odd man, she really could not understand me.

We were back at Shrublands at two. Of course we must not keep the children's dinner waiting; and of course Mr. Drencher drove up at five minutes past two, with his gig-horse all in a lather. I, who knew the secrets of the house, was amused to see the furious glances which Bedford darted from the sideboard, or as he served the doctor with cutlets. Drencher, for his part, scowled at me. I, for my part, was easy, witty, pleasant, and I trust profoundly wicked and malicious. I bragged about my aristocratic friends to Lady Baker. I trumped her old-world stories about George the Fourth at Dublin with the latest dandified intelligence I had learned at the club. That the young doctor should be dazzled and disgusted was, I own, my wish; and I enjoyed his rage as I saw him choking with jealousy over his victuals.

But why was Lady Baker sulky with me? How came it, my fashionable stories had no effect upon that polite matron? Yesterday at dinner she had been gracious enough; and turning her back upon those poor simple Bonningtons, who knew nothing of the *beau monde* at all, had condescended to address herself specially to me several times with an 'I need not tell *you*, Mr. Batchelor, that the Duchess of Dorsetshire's maiden name was De Bobus;' or, 'You know very well that the etiquette at the Lord Lieutenant's balls, at Dublin Castle, is for the wives of baronets to——,' etc. etc

Now whence, I say, did it arise that Lady Baker, who had been kind and familiar with me on Sunday, should on Monday turn me a shoulder as cold as that lamb which I offered to carve for the family, and which remained from yesterday's quarter? I had thought of staying but two days at Shrublands. I generally am bored at country-houses. I was going away on the Monday morning, but Lovel, when he and I and the children and Miss Prior breakfasted together before he went to business, pressed me to stay so heartily and sincerely, that I agreed, gladly enough, to remain. I could finish a scene or two of my tragedy at my leisure; besides, there were one or two little comedies going on in the house which inspired me with no little curiosity.

Lady Baker growled at me, then, during lunch-time. She addressed herself in whispers and hints to Mr. Drencher. She

had in her own man Bulkeley, and bullied him. She desired to know whether she was to have the barouche or not; and when informed that it was at her ladyship's service, said it was a great deal too cold for the open carriage, and that she would have the brougham. When she was told that Mr. and Mrs. Bonnington had impounded the brougham, she said she had no idea of people taking other people's carriages: and when Mr. Bedford remarked that her ladyship had her choice that morning, and had chosen the barouche, she said, 'I didn't speak to you, sir: and I will thank you not to address me until you are spoken to!' She made the place so hot that I began to wish I had quitted it.

'And pray, Miss Prior, where is Captain Baker to sleep,' she asked, 'now that the ground-floor is engaged?'

Miss Prior meekly said, 'Captain Baker would have the pink room.'

'The room on my landing-place, without double doors? Impossible! Clarence is always smoking. Clarence will fill the whole house with his smoke. He shall *not* sleep in the pink room. I expected the ground-floor room for him, which—a—this gentleman persists in not vacating.' And the dear creature looked me full in the face.

'This gentleman smokes, too, and is so comfortable where he is, that he proposes to remain there,' I say, with a bland smile.

'Haspic of plovers' eggs, sir,' says Bedford, handing a dish over my back. And he actually gave me a little dig, and growled, 'Go it—give it her.'

'There is a capital inn on the Heath,' I continue, peeling one of my opal favourites. 'If Captain Baker must smoke, he may have a room there.'

'Sir! my son does not live at inns,' cries Lady Baker.

'O grandma! Don't he though? And wasn't there a row at the Star and Garter; and didn't Pa pay uncle Clarence's bill there, though?'

'Silence, Popham. Little boys should be seen and not heard,' says Cissy. 'Shouldn't little boys be seen and not heard, Miss Prior?'

'They shouldn't insult their grandmothers. O my Cecilia—my Cecilia?' cries Lady Baker, lifting her hand.

'You shan't hit me! I say, you shan't hit me!' roars Pop, starting back, and beginning to square at his enraged ancestress. The scene was growing painful. And there was that rascal of a Bedford choking with suppressed laughter at the sideboard. Bulkeley, her ladyship's man, stood calm as fate; but young

Buttons burst out in a guffaw ; on which, I assure you, Lady Baker looked as savage as Lady Macbeth.

‘Am I to be insulted by my daughter’s servants?’ cries Lady Baker. ‘I will leave the house this instant.’

‘At what hour will your ladyship have the barouche?’ says Bedford, with perfect gravity.

If Mr. Drencher had whipped out a lancet and bled Lady B. on the spot, he would have done her good. I shall draw the curtain over this sad—this humiliating scene. Drop, little curtain ! on this absurd little act.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ‘A BLACK SHEEP.’



THE being for whom my friend Dick Bedford seemed to have a special contempt and aversion was Mr. Bulkeley, the tall footman in attendance upon Lovel's dear mother-in-law. One of the causes of Bedford's wrath, the worthy fellow explained to me. In the servants' hall, Bulkeley was in the habit of speaking in disrespectful and satirical terms of his mistress, enlarging upon her

many foibles, and describing her pecuniary difficulties to the many *habitués* of that second social circle at Shrublands. The hold which Mr. Bulkeley had over his lady lay in a long unsettled account of wages, which her ladyship was quite disinclined to discharge. And, in spite of this insolvency, the footman must have found his profit in the place, for he continued to hold it from year to year, and to fatten on his earnings, such as they were. My lady's dignity did not allow her to travel without this huge personage in her train; and a great comfort it must have been to her, to reflect that in all the country-houses which she visited (and she would go wherever she could force an invitation) her attendant freely explained himself regarding her peculiarities, and made his brother servants aware of his mistress's embarrassed condition. And yet the woman, whom I suppose no soul alive respected (unless, haply, she herself had a hankering delusion that she was a respectable woman), thought that her position in life

forbade her to move abroad without a maid and this hulking incumbrance in plush ; and never was seen anywhere in watering-place, country-house, hotel, unless she was so attended.

Between Bedford and Bulkeley, then, there was feud and mutual hatred. Bedford chafed the big man by constant sneers and sarcasms, which penetrated the other's dull hide, and caused him frequently to assert that he would punch Dick's ugly head off. The housekeeper had frequently to interpose, and fling her matronly arms between these men of war ; and perhaps Bedford was forced to be still at times, for Bulkeley was nine inches taller than himself, and was perpetually bragging of his skill and feats as a bruiser. This sultan may also have wished to fling his pocket-handkerchief to Miss Mary Pinhorn, who, though she loved Bedford's wit and cleverness, might also be not insensible to the magnificent chest, calves, whiskers, of Mr. Bulkeley. On this delicate subject, however, I can't speak. The men hated each other. You have, no doubt, remarked in your experience of life, that when men *do* hate each other, about a woman, or some other cause, the real reason is never assigned. You say, 'The conduct of such and such a man to his grandmother—his behaviour in selling that horse to Benson—his manner of brushing his hair down the middle'—or what you will, 'makes him so offensive to me that I can't endure him.' His verses, therefore, are mediocre ; his speeches in Parliament are utter failures ; his practice at the bar is dwindling every year ; his powers (always small) are utterly leaving him, and he is repeating his confounded jokes until they quite nauseate. Why, only about myself, and within these three days, I read a nice little article—written in sorrow, you know, not in anger—by our eminent *confrère* Wiggins<sup>1</sup> deploring the decay of, etc. etc. And Wiggins's little article which was not found suitable for a certain Magazine?—*Allons donc !* The drunkard says the pickled salmon gave him the headache ; the man who hates us gives *a* reason, but not *the* reason. Bedford was angry with Bulkeley for abusing his mistress at the servants' table ? Yes. But for what else besides ? I don't care—nor possibly does your worship, the exalted reader, for these low vulgar kitchen quarrels.

Out of that ground-floor room, then, I would not move in spite of the utmost efforts of my Lady Baker's broad shoulder to push me out ; and with many grins that evening, Bedford complimented me on my gallantry in routing the enemy at luncheon. I think he may possibly have told his master, for Lovel looked very much

<sup>1</sup> To another celebrated critic. Dear Sir—You think I mean you, but upon my honour I don't.



alarmed and uneasy when we greeted each other on his return from the city, but became more composed when Lady Baker appeared at the second dinner-bell, without a trace on her fine countenance of that storm which had caused all her waves to heave with such commotion at noon. How finely some people, by the way, can hang up quarrels—or pop them into a drawer, as they do their work, when dinner is announced, and take them out again at a convenient season! Baker was mild, gentle, a thought sad and sentimental—tenderly interested about her dear son and daughter, in Ireland, whom she *must* go and see—quite easy in hand, in a word, and to the immense relief of all of us. She kissed Lovel on retiring, and prayed blessings on her Frederick. She pointed to the picture: nothing could be more melancholy or more gracious.

‘*She go?*’ says Mr. Bedford to me at night—‘not she. She knows when she’s well off; was obliged to turn out of Bakers-town before she came here; that brute Bulkeley told me so. She’s always quarrelling with her son and his wife. Angels don’t grow everywhere as they do at Putney, Mr. B.! You gave it her well to-day at lunch, you did though!’ During my stay at Shrublands, Mr. Bedford paid me a regular evening visit in my room, set the *carte du pays* before me, and in his curt way acquainted me with the characters of the inmates of the house, and the incidents occurring therein.

Captain Clarence Baker did not come to Shrublands on the day when his anxious mother wished to clear out my nest (and expel the amiable bird in it) for her son’s benefit. I believe an important fight, which was to come off in the Essex Marshes, and which was postponed in consequence of the interposition of the county magistrates, was the occasion, or at any rate the pretext, of the captain’s delay. ‘He likes seeing fights better than going to ’em, the captain does,’ my major-domo remarked. ‘His regiment was ordered to India, and he sold out: climate don’t agree with his precious health. The captain ain’t been here ever so long, not since poor Mrs. L.’s time, before Miss P. came here: Captain Clarence and his sister had a tremendous quarrel together. He was up to all sorts of pranks, the captain was. Not a good lot, by any means, I should say, Mr Batchelor.’ And here Bedford begins to laugh. ‘Did you ever read, sir, a farce called *Ruising the Wind*? There’s plenty of Jeremy Diddlers now, Captain Jeremy Diddlers and Lady Jeremy Diddlers too. Have you such a thing as half-a-crown about you? If you have, don’t invest it in some folks’ pockets—that’s all. Beg your pardon, sir, if I am bothering you with talking!’

As long as I was at Shrublands, and ready to partake of breakfast with my kind host and his children and their governess, Lady Baker had her own breakfast taken to her room. But when there were no visitors in the house, she would come groaning out of her bedroom to be present at the morning meal; and not uncommonly would give the little company anecdotes of the departed saint, under whose invocation, as it were, we were assembled, and whose simpering effigy looked down upon us, over her harp, and from the wall. The eyes of the portrait followed you about, as portraits' eyes so painted will; and those glances, as it seemed to me, still domineered over Lovel, and made him quail as they had done in life. Yonder, in the corner, was Cecilia's harp, with its leathern cover. I likened the skin to that drum which the dying Zisca ordered should be made out of his hide, to be beaten before the hosts of his people and inspire terror. *Vous concevez*, I did not say to Lovel at breakfast, as I sat before the ghostly musical instrument, 'My dear fellow, that skin of Cordovan leather belonging to your defunct Cecilia's harp, is like the hide which,' etc; but I confess, at first, I used to have a sort of *crawly* sensation, as of a sickly genteel ghost flitting about the place, in an exceedingly peevish humour, trying to scold and command, and finding her defunct voice couldn't be heard—trying to re-illuminate her extinguished leers and faded smiles and ogles, and finding no one admired or took note. In the grey of the gloaming, in the twilight corner where stands the shrouded companion of song—what is that white figure flickering round the silent harp? Once, as we were assembled in the room at afternoon tea, a bird, entering at the open window, perched on the instrument. Popham dashed at it. Lovel was deep in conversation upon the wine duties with a Member of Parliament he had brought down to dinner. Lady Baker, who was, if I may use the expression, 'jawing,' as usual, and telling one of her tremendous stories about the Lord Lieutenant to Mr. Bonnington, took no note of the incident. Elizabeth did not seem to remark it: what was a bird on a harp to her, but a sparrow perched on a bit of leather-casing! All the ghosts in Putney churchyard might rattle all their bones, and would not frighten that stout spirit!

I was amused at a precaution which Bedford took, and somewhat alarmed at the distrust towards Lady Baker which he exhibited, when, one day on my return from town—whither I had made an excursion of four or five hours—I found my bedroom door locked, and Dick arrived with the key. 'He's wrote to say he's coming this evening, and if he had come when you was away,

Lady B. was capable of turning your things out, and putting his in, and taking her oath she believed you was going to leave. The long-bows Lady B. do pull are perfectly awful, Mr. B. ! So it was long-bow to long-bow, Mr. Batchelor ; and I said you had took the key in your pocket, not wishing to have your papers disturbed. She tried the lawn window, but I had bolted that, and the captain will have the pink room, after all, and must smoke up the chimney. I should have liked to see him, or you, or any one do it in poor Mrs. L.'s time—I just should !'

During my visit to London, I had chanced to meet my friend Captain Fitz-B—dle, who belongs to a dozen clubs, and knows something of every man in London. 'Know anything of Clarence Baker?' 'Of course I do,' says Fitz ; 'and if you want any *renseignement*, my dear fellow, I have the honour to inform you that a blacker little sheep does not trot the London *pavé*. Wherever that ingenious officer's name is spoken—at Tattersall's, at his clubs, in his late regiments, in men's society, in ladies' society, in that expanding and most agreeable circle which you may call no society at all—a chorus of maledictions rises up at the mention of Baker. Know anything of Clarence Baker ! My dear fellow, enough to make your hair turn white, unless (as I sometimes fondly imagine) nature has already performed that process, when of course I can't pretend to act upon mere hair-dye.' (The whiskers of the individual who addressed me, innocent, stared me in the face as he spoke, and were dyed of the most unblushing purple.) 'Clarence Baker, sir, is a young man who would have been invaluable in Sparta as a warning against drunkenness and an exemplar of it. He has helped the regimental surgeon to some most interesting experiments in *delirium tremens*. He is known, and not in the least trusted, in every billiard-room in Brighton, Canterbury, York, Sheffield—on every pavement which has rung with the clink of dragoon boot-heels. By a wise system of revoking at whist he has lost games which have caused not only his partners, but his opponents and the whole club to admire him and to distrust him : long before and since he was of age, he has written his eminent name to bills which have been dishonoured, and has nobly pleaded his minority as a reason for declining to pay. From the garrison towns where he has been quartered, he has carried away not only the hearts of the milliners, but their gloves, haberdashery, and perfumery. He has had controversies with Cornet Green, regarding horse transactions ; disputed turf-accounts with Lieutenant Brown ; and betting and back-gammon differences with Captain Black. From all I have heard, he is the worthy son of his admirable mother. And I bet you even on the

four events, if you stay three days in a country-house with him, which appears to be your present happy idea,—that he will quarrel with you, insult you, and apologise; that he will intoxicate himself more than once; that he will offer to play cards with you, and not pay on losing (if he wins, I perhaps need not state what his conduct will be); and that he will try to borrow money from you, and most likely from your servant, before he goes away.' So saying, the sententious Fitz strutted up the steps of one of his many club-haunts in Pall Mall, and left me forewarned, and I trust fore-armed agained Captain Clarence and all his works.

The adversary, when at length I came in sight of him, did not seem very formidable. I beheld a weakly little man with Chinese eyes, and pretty little feet and hands, whose pallid countenance told of Finishes and Casinos. His little chest and fingers were decorated with many jewels. A perfume of tobacco hung round him. His little moustache was twisted with an elaborate gummy curl. I perceived that the little hand which twirled the moustache shook woefully; and from the little chest there came a cough surprisingly loud and dismal.

He was lying on a sofa as I entered, and the children of the house were playing round him. 'If you are our uncle, why didn't you come to see us oftener?' asks Popham.

'How should I know that you were such uncommonly nice children?' asks the captain.

'We're not nice to you,' says Popham. 'Why do you cough so? Mamma used to cough. And why does your hand shake so?'

'My hand shakes because I am ill: and I cough because I'm ill. Your mother died of it, and I daresay I shall too.'

'I hope you'll be good, and repent before you die, uncle, and I will lend you some nice books,' says Cecilia.

'Oh, bother books!' cries Pop.

'And I hope *you'll* be good, Popham,' and 'You hold *your* tongue, miss,' and 'I shall,' and 'I shan't,' and 'You're another,' and 'I'll tell Miss Prior,'—'Go and tell, tell-tale'—'Boo'—'Boo'—'Boo'—'Boo'—and I don't know what more exclamations came tumultuously and rapidly from these dear children, as their uncle lay before them, a handkerchief to his mouth, his little feet high raised on the sofa-cushions.

Captain Baker turned a little eye towards me, as I entered the room, but did not change his easy and elegant posture. When I came near to the sofa where he reposed, he was good enough to call out:

'Glass of sherry!'

'It's Mr. Batchelor ; it isn't Bedford, uncle,' says Cissy.

'Mr. Batchelor ain't got any sherry in his pocket :—have you, Mr. Batchelor ? You ain't like old Mrs. Prior always pocketing things, are you ?' cries Pop, and falls a-laughing at the ludicrous idea of my being mistaken for Bedford.

'Beg your pardon. How should I know, you know ?' draws the invalid on the sofa. 'Everybody's the same now, you see.'

'Sir !' says I, and 'sir' was all I could say. The fact is, I could have replied with something remarkably neat and cutting, which would have transfixed the languid little jackanapes who dared to mistake me for a footman ; but, you see, I only thought of my repartee some eight hours afterwards when I was lying in bed, and I am sorry to own that a great number of my best *bon mots* have been made in that way. So as I had not the pungent remark ready when wanted, I can't say I said it to Captain Baker, but I daresay I turned very red, and said 'Sir !' and—and in fact that was all.

'You were goin' to say somethin' ?' asked the captain, affably.

'You know my friend Mr. Fitz-Boodle, I believe ?' said I ; the fact is I really did not know what to say.

'Some mistake—think not.'

'He is a member of the Flag Club,' I remarked, looking my young fellow hard in the face.

'I ain't. There's a set of cads in that club that will say anything.'

'You may not know him, sir, but he seemed to know you very well. Are we to have any tea, children ?' I say, flinging myself down on an easy-chair, taking up a magazine, and adopting an easy attitude, though I daresay my face was as red as a turkey-cock's, and I was boiling over with rage.

As we had a very good breakfast and a profuse luncheon at Shrublands, of course we could not support nature till dinner-time without a five-o'clock tea ; and this was the meal for which I pretended to ask. Bedford, with his silver kettle, and his buttony satellite, presently brought in this refection, and of course the children bawled out to him—

'Bedford—Bedford ! uncle mistook Mr. Batchelor for you.'

'I could not be mistaken for a more honest man, Pop,' said I. And the bearer of the tea-urn gave me a look of gratitude and kindness which, I own, went far to restore my ruffled equanimity.

'Since you are the butler, will you get me a glass of sherry and a biscuit ?' says the Captain. And Bedford retiring, returned presently with the wine.

The young gentleman's hand shook so, that, in order to drink



his wine, he had to surprise it, as it were, and seize it with his mouth, when a shake brought the glass near his lips. He drained the wine, and held out his hand for another glass. The hand was steadier now.

'You the man who was here before?' asks the captain.

'Six years ago, when you were here, sir,' says the butler.

'What! I ain't changed, I suppose.'

'Yes, you are, sir.'

'Then, how the dooce do you remember me?'

'You forgot to pay me some money you borrowed of me—one pound five, sir,' says Bedford, whose eyes slyly turned in my direction.

And here, according to her wont at this meal, the dark-robed Miss Prior entered the room. She was coming forward with her ordinarily erect attitude and firm step, but paused in her walk an instant, and when she came to us, I thought, looked remarkably pale. She made a slight curtsy, and it must be confessed that Captain Baker rose up from his sofa for a moment when she appeared. She then sat down, with her back towards him, turning towards herself the table and its tea apparatus.

At this board my Lady Baker found us assembled when she returned from her afternoon drive. She flew to her darling reprobate of a son. She took his hand, she smoothed back his hair from his damp forehead. 'My darling child,' cries this fond mother, 'what a pulse you have got!'

'I suppose, because I've been drinking,' says the prodigal.

'Why didn't you come out driving with me? The afternoon was lovely!'

'To pay visits at Richmond? Not as I knows on, ma'am,' says the invalid. 'Conversation with elderly ladies about poodles, Bible societies, that kind of thing. It must be a doosid lovely afternoon that would make me like that sort of game.' And here comes a fit of coughing, over which mamma ejaculates her sympathy.

'Kick—kick—killin' myself!' gasps out the captain, 'know I am. No man can lead my life, and stand it. Dyin' by inches! Dyin' by whole yards, by Jo-ho-hove, I am!' Indeed, he was as bad in health as in morals, this graceless captain.

'That man of Lovel's seems a d—— insolent beggar,' he presently and ingenuously remarks.

'O uncle, you mustn't say those words!' cries niece Cissy.

'He's a man, and may say what he likes, and so will I, when I'm a man. Yes, and I'll say it now, too, if I like,' cries Master Popham.

‘Not to give me pain, Popham? Will you?’ asks the governess.

On which the boy says—‘Well, who wants to hurt you, Miss Prior?’

And our colloquy ends by the arrival of the man of the house from the city.

What I have admired in some dear women is their capacity for quarrelling and for reconciliation. As I saw Lady Baker hanging round her son’s neck, and fondling his scanty ringlets, I remembered the awful stories with which in former days she used to entertain us regarding this reprobate. Her heart was pincushioned with his filial crimes. Under her chestnut front her ladyship’s real head of hair was grey, in consequence of his iniquities. His precocious appetite had devoured the greater part of her jointure. He had treated her many dangerous illnesses with indifference: had been the worst son, the worst brother, the most ill-conducted school-boy, the most immoral young man—the terror of households, the Lovelace of garrison towns, the perverter of young officers; in fact, Lady Baker did not know how she supported existence at all under the agony occasioned by his crimes, and it was only from the possession of a more than ordinarily strong sense of religion that she was enabled to bear her burden.

The captain himself explained these alternating maternal caresses and quarrels in his easy way.

‘Saw how the old lady kissed and fondled me?’ says he to his brother-in-law. ‘Quite refreshin’, ain’t it? Hang me, I thought she was goin’ to send me a bit of sweetbread off her own plate. Came up to my room last night, wanted to tuck me up in bed, and abused my brother to me for an hour. You see, when I’m in favour, she always abuses Baker; when *he’s* in favour, she abuses me to him. And my sister-in-law, didn’t she give it my sister-in-law. Oh! I’ll trouble you! And poor Cecilia—why hang me, Mr. Batchelor, she used to go on—this bottle’s corked, I’m hanged if it isn’t—to go on about Cecilia, and call her—— Hullo!’

Here he was interrupted by our host, who said sternly—

‘Will you please to forget those quarrels, or not mention them here? Will you have more wine, Batchelor.’

And Lovel rises, and haughtily stalks out of the room. To do Lovel justice, he had a great contempt and dislike for his young brother-in-law, which, with his best magnanimity, he could not at all times conceal.

So our host stalks towards the drawing-room, leaving Captain Clarence sipping wine.

'Don't go, too,' says the captain. 'He's a confounded rum fellow, my brother-in-law is. He's a confounded ill-conditioned fellow too. They always are, you know, these tradesmen fellows, these half-bred 'uns. I used to tell my sister so; but she *would* have him, because he had such lots of money, you know. And she threw over a fellar she was very fond of; and I told her she'd regret it. I told Lady B. she'd regret it. It was all Lady B.'s doing. She made Cissy throw the fellar over. He was a bad match, certainly, Tom Mountain was; and not a clever fellow, you know, or that sort of thing; but at any rate, he was a gentleman, and better than a confounded sugar-baking beggar out Ratcliffe Highway.'

'You seem to find that claret very good!' I remark, speaking, I may say, Socratically, to my young friend, who had been swallowing bumper after bumper.

'Claret good! Yes, doosid good!'

'Well, you see our confounded sugar-baker gives you his best.'

'And why shouldn't he, hang him? Why, the fellow chokes with money. What does it matter to him how much he spends. You're a poor man, I daresay. You don't look as if you were overflush of money. Well, if *you* stood a good dinner, it would be all right—I mean it would show—you understand me, you know. But a sugar-baker with ten thousand a year, what does it matter to him, bottle of claret more—less?'

'Let us go into the ladies!' I say.

'Go into mother! I don't want to go into my mother,' cried out the artless youth. 'And I don't want to go into the sugar-baker, hang him! and I don't want to go into the children; and I'd rather have a glass of brandy and water with you, old boy. Here, you! What's your name? Bedford! I owe you five-and-twenty shillings, do I, old Bedford? Give us a good glass of Schnapps, and I'll pay you. Look here, Batchelor. I hate that sugar-baker. Two years ago I drew a bill on him, and he wouldn't pay it—perhaps he would have paid it, but my sister wouldn't let him. And, I say, shall we go and have a cigar in your room? My mother's been abusing you to me like fun this morning. She abuses everybody. She used to abuse Cissy. Cissy used to abuse her—used to fight like two cats——'

And if I narrate this conversation, dear Spartan youth! if I show thee this Helot maundering in his cups, it is that from his odious example thou mayest learn to be moderate in the use of thine own. Has the enemy who has entered thy mouth ever stolen away thy brains? Has wine ever caused thee to blab

secrets; to utter egotisms and follies? Beware of it. Has it ever been thy friend at the end of the hard day's work, the cheery companion of thy companions, the promoter of harmony, kindness, harmless social pleasure? be thankful for it. Two years since, when the comet was blazing in the autumnal sky, I stood on the *château*-steps of a great claret proprietor. '*Boirai-je de ton vin, O comète?*' I said, addressing the luminary with the flaming tail. 'Shall those generous bunches which you ripen yield their juices for me *morituro?*' It was a solemn thought. Ah! my dear brethren! who knows the Order of the Fates? When shall we pass the Gloomy Gates! Which of us goes, which of us waits to drink those famous Fifty-eights? A sermon, upon my word! And pray why not a little homily on an autumn eve over a purple cluster? If that rickety boy had only drunk claret, I warrant you his tongue would not have blabbed, his hand would not have shaken, his wretched little brain and body would not have reeled with fever.

'Gad,' said he next day to me, 'cut again last night. Have an idea that I abused Lovel. When I have a little wine on board, always speak my mind, don't you know. Last time I was here in my poor sister's time, said somethin' to her, don't quite know what it was, somethin' confoundedly true and unpleasant, I daresay. I think it was about a fellow she used to go on with before she married the sugar-baker. And I got orders to quit, by Jove, sir—neck and crop, sir, and no mistake! And we gave it one another over the stairs. Oh my! we did pitch in!—And that was the last time I ever saw Cecilia—give you my word. A doosid unforgiving woman, my poor sister was, and between you and me, Batchelor, as great a flirt as ever threw a fellar over. You should have heard her and my Lady B. go on, that's all!—Well, mamma, are you going out for a drive in the coachy-poachy?—Not as I knows on, thank you, as I before had the honour to observe. Mr. Batchelor and me are going to play a little game at billiards.' We did, and I won; and, from that day to this, have never been paid my little winnings.

On the day after the doughty captain's arrival, Miss Prior, in whose face I had remarked a great expression of gloom and care, neither made her appearance at breakfast nor at the children's dinner. 'Miss Prior was a little unwell,' Lady Baker said, with an air of most perfect satisfaction. 'Mr. Drencher will come to see her this afternoon, and prescribe for her, I daresay,' adds her ladyship, nodding and winking a roguish eye at me. I was at a loss to understand what was the point of humour which amused Lady B. until she explained it.

'My good sir,' she said, 'I think Miss Prior is not at all *averse* to being ill.' And the nods recommenced.

'As how?' I ask.

'To being ill, or at least to calling in the medical man.'

'Attachment between governess and Sawbones, I make bold for to presume?' says the captain.

'Precisely, Clarence—a very fitting match. I saw the affair, even before Miss Prior owned it—that is to say, she has not denied it. She says she can't afford to marry, that she has children enough at home in her brothers and sisters. She is a well-principled young woman, and does credit, Mr. Batchelor, to your recommendation, and the education she has received from her uncle, the Master of St. Boniface.'

'Cissy to school; Pop to Eton; and Miss What-d'-you-call to grind the pestle in Sawbones' back shop: I see!' says Captain Clarence. 'He seems a low, vulgar blackguard that Sawbones.'

'Of course, my love; what can you expect from that sort of person?' asks mamma, whose own father was a small attorney in a small Irish town.

'I wish I had his confounded good health,' cries Clarence, coughing.

'My poor darling!' says mamma.

I said nothing. And so Elizabeth was engaged to that great, broad-shouldered, red-whiskered young surgeon with the huge appetite and the dubious *h's*! Well, why not? What was it to me? Why shouldn't she marry him? Was he not an honest man, and a fitting match for her? Yes. Very good. Only if I *do* love a bird or flower to glad me with its dark blue eye, it is the first to fade away. If I *have* a partiality for a young gazelle it is the first to—psha! What have I to do with this namby-pamby? Can the heart that has truly loved ever forget, and doesn't it as truly love on to the—stuff. I am past the age of such follies. I might have made a woman happy; I think I should. But the fugacious years have lapsed, my Posthumus! My waist is now a good bit wider than my chest, and it is decreed that I shall be alone!

My tone, then, when next I saw Elizabeth, was sorrowful—not angry. Drencher, the young doctor, came punctually enough you may be sure, to look after his patient. Little Pinhorn, the children's maid, led the young practitioner smiling towards the schoolroom regions. His creaking high-lows sprang swiftly up the stairs. I happened to be in the hall, and surveyed him with a grim pleasure. 'Now he is in the schoolroom,' I thought. 'Now he is taking her hand—it is very white—and feeling her pulse.'



And so on, and so on. Surely, surely Pinhorn remains in the room?' I am sitting on a hall-table as I muse plaintively on these things, and gaze up the stairs by which the Hakeem (great, carrotty-whiskered cad) has passed into the sacred precincts of the harem. As I gaze up the stair, another door opens into the hall; a scowling face peeps through that door, and looks up the stair too. 'Tis Bedford, who has slid out of his pantry, and watches the doctor. And thou, too, my poor Bedford! Oh! the whole world throbs with vain heart-pangs, and tosses and heaves with longing, unfulfilled desires! All night, and all over the world, bitter tears are dropping as regular as the dew, and cruel memories are haunting the pillow. Close my hot eyes, kind Sleep! Do not visit it, dear delusive images out of the Past! Often your figure shimmers through my dreams, Glorvina. Not as you are now, the stout mother of many children—you always had an alarming likeness to your own mother, Glorvina—but as you were—slim, black-haired, blue-eyed—when your carnation lips warbled the *Vale of Avoca*, or the *Angel's Whisper*. 'What!' I say then, looking up the stair, 'am I absolutely growing jealous of yon apothecary?—O fool!' And at this juncture, out peers Bedford's face from the pantry, and I see he is jealous too. I tie my shoe as I sit on the table; I don't affect to notice Bedford in the least (who, in fact, pops his own head back again as soon as he sees mine). I take my wide-awake from the peg, set it on one side my head, and strut whistling out of the hall-door. I stretch over Putney Heath, and my spirit resumes its tranquillity.

I sometimes keep a little journal of my proceedings, and on referring to its pages, the scene rises before me pretty clearly to which the brief notes allude. On this day I find noted: '*Friday, July 14th—B. came down to-day. Seems to require a great deal of attendance from Dr.—Row between dowagers after dinner.*' 'B.,' I need not remark, is Bessy. 'Dr.,' of course, you know. 'Row between dowagers,' means a battle royal between Mrs. Bonnington and Lady Baker, such as not unfrequently raged under the kindly Lovel's roof.

Lady Baker's gigantic menial Bulkeley condescended to wait at the family dinner at Shrublands, when perforce he had to put himself under Mr. Bedford's orders. Bedford would gladly have dispensed with the London footman, over whose calves, he said, he and his boy were always tumbling; but Lady Baker's dignity would not allow her to part from her own man; and her good-natured son-in-law allowed her, and indeed almost all other persons, to have their own way. I have reason to fear Mr. Bulkeley's morals were loose. Mrs. Bonnington had a special

horror of him ; his behaviour in the village public-houses, where his powder and plush were for ever visible—his freedom of behaviour and conversation before the good lady's nurse and parlour-maids—provoked her anger and suspicion. More than once she whispered to me her loathing of this flour-besprinkled monster ; and, as much as such a gentle creature could, she showed her dislike to him by her behaviour. The flunkey's solemn equanimity was not to be disturbed by any such feeble indications of displeasure. From his powdered height, he looked down upon Mrs. Bonnington, and her esteem or her dislike was beneath him.

Now on this Friday night the 14th Captain Clarence had gone to pass the day in town, and our Bessy made her appearance again, the doctor's prescriptions having, I suppose, agreed with her. Mr. Bulkeley, who was handing coffee to the ladies, chose to offer none to Miss Prior, and I was amused when I saw Bedford's heel scrunch down on the flunkey's right foot, as he pointed towards the governess. The oaths which Bulkeley had to devour in silence must have been frightful. To do the gallant fellow justice, I think he would have died rather than speak before company in a drawing-room. He limped up and offered the refreshment to the young lady, who bowed and declined it.

'Frederick,' Mrs. Bonnington begins, when the coffee-ceremony is over, 'now the servants are gone, I must scold you about the waste at your table, my dear. What was the need of opening that great bottle of champagne? Lady Baker only takes two glasses. Mr. Batchelor doesn't touch it.' (No, thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington : too old a stager.) 'Why not have a little bottle instead of that great, large, immense one? Bedford is a teetotaller. I suppose it is *that London footman who likes it.*'

'My dear mother, I haven't really ascertained his tastes,' says Lovel.

'Then why not tell Bedford to open a pint, dear?' pursues mamma.

'Oh, Bedford—Bedford, we must not mention *him*, Mrs. Bonnington!' cries Lady Baker. 'Bedford is faultless. Bedford has the keys of everything. Bedford is not to be controlled in anything. Bedford is to be at liberty to be rude to my servant.'

'Bedford was admirably kind in his attendance on your daughter, Lady Baker,' says Lovel, his brow darkening : 'and as for your man, I should think he was big enough to protect himself from any rudeness of poor Dick!' The good fellow had been angry for one moment, at the next he was all for peace and conciliation.

Lady Baker puts on her superfine air. With that air she had

often awe-stricken good, simple Mrs. Bonnington ; and she loved to use it whenever City folks or humble people were present. You see she thought herself your superior and mine : as *de par le monde* there are many artless Lady Bakers who do. ‘My dear Frederick!’ says Lady B. then, putting on her best Mayfair manner, ‘excuse me for saying, but you don’t know the—the class of servant to which Bulkeley belongs. I had him as a great favour from Lord Toddleby’s. That—that class of servant is not generally accustomed to go out single.’

‘Unless they are two behind a carriage perch they pine away, I suppose,’ remarks Mr. Lovel, ‘as one love-bird does without his mate.’

‘No doubt—no doubt,’ says Lady B., who does not in the least understand him : ‘I only say you are not accustomed here—in this kind of establishment, you understand—to that class—of——’

But here Mrs. Bonnington could contain her wrath no more. ‘Lady Baker!’ cries that injured mother, ‘is my son’s establishment not good enough for any powdered wretch in England? Is the house of a British merchant——’

‘My dear creature—my dear creature!’ interposes her ladyship, ‘it *is* the house of a British merchant, and a most comfortable house too.’

‘Yes, as you find it,’ remarks mamma.

‘Yes, as I find it, when I come to take care of that *departed angel’s children*, Mrs. Bonnington!’ (Lady B. here indicates the Cecilian effigy)—‘of that dear seraph’s orphans, Mrs. Bonnington! You cannot. You have other duties—other children—a husband, whom you have left at home in delicate health, and who——’

‘Lady Baker!’ exclaims Mrs. Bonnington, ‘no one shall say I don’t take care of my dear husband!’

‘My dear Lady Baker!—my dear—dear mother!’ cries Lovel, *éplové*, and whimpers aside to me, ‘They spar in this way every night, when we’re alone. It’s too bad, ain’t it, Batch?’

‘I say you *do* take care of Mr. Bonnington,’ Baker blandly resumes (she has hit Mrs. Bonnington on the raw place, and smilingly proceeds to thong again)—‘I say you *do* take care of your husband, my dear creature, and that is why you can’t attend to Frederick! And as he is of a very easy temper,—except sometimes with his poor Cecilia’s mother,—he allows all his tradesmen to cheat him; all his servants to cheat him, Bedford to be rude to everybody; and if to me, why not to my servant Bulkeley, with whom Lord Toddleby’s groom of the chambers gave me the very highest character.’

Mrs. Bonnington in a great flurry broke in by saying she was surprised to hear that noblemen *had* grooms in their chambers: and she thought they were much better in the stables: and when they dined with Captain Huff, you know, Frederick, *his* man always brought such a dreadful smell of the stable in with him, that—— Here she paused. Baker's eye was on her; and that dowager was grinning a cruel triumph.

'He, he! You mistake—my good Mrs. Bonnington!' says her ladyship. 'Your poor mother mistakes, my dear Frederick. You have lived in a quiet and most respectable sphere, but not, you understand, not——'

'Not what pray, Lady Baker? We have lived in this neighbourhood twenty years: in my late husband's time, when *we saw a great deal of company*, and this dear Frederick was a boy at Westminster School. And we have *paid* for everything we have had for twenty years; and we have not owed a penny to any *tradesman*. And we may not have had *powdered footmen*, six feet high, impertinent beasts, who were rude to all the maids in the place. Don't—I *will* speak, Frederick! But servants who loved us, and who were *paid their wages*, and who-o-ho-ho!'

Wipe your eyes, dear friends! out with all your pocket-handkerchiefs. I protest I cannot bear to see a woman in distress. Of course Fred Lovel runs to console his dear old mother, and vows Lady Baker meant no harm.

'Meant harm! My dear Frederick, what harm can I mean? I only said your poor mother did not seem to know what a groom of the chambers was! How should she?'

'Come—come,' says Frederick, 'enough of this! Miss Prior, will you be so kind as to give us a little music?'

Miss Prior was playing Beethoven at the piano, very solemnly and finely, when our Black Sheep returned to this quiet fold, and, I am sorry to say, in a very riotous condition. The brilliancy of his eye, the purple flush on his nose, the unsteady gait, the uncertain tone of voice, told tales of Captain Clarence, who stumbled over more than one chair before he found a seat near me.

'Quite right, old boy,' says he, winking at me. 'Cut again—dooshid good fellosh. Better than being along with you shtoopid-old-fogish.' And he began to warble wild 'Fol-de-rol-lolls' in an insane accompaniment to the music.

'By heavens, this is too bad!' growls Lovel. 'Lady Baker, let your big man carry your son to bed. Thank you, Miss Prior!'

At a final yell, which the unlucky young scapegrace gave, Elizabeth stopped, and rose from the piano, looking very pale. She made her curtsy, and was departing when the wretched

young captain sprang up, looked at her, and sank back on the sofa with another wild laugh. Bessy fled away scared, and white as a sheet.

‘TAKE THE BRUTE TO BED!’ roars the master of the house, in great wrath. And scapegrace was conducted to his apartment, whither he went laughing wildly, and calling out, ‘Come on, old sh-sh-shugar-baker!’

The morning after this fine exhibition, Captain Clarence Baker’s mamma announced to us that her poor dear suffering boy was too ill to come to breakfast, and I believe he prescribed for himself devilled drumstick and soda-water, of which he partook in his bedroom. Lovel, seldom angry, was violently wroth with his brother-in-law; and, almost always polite, was at breakfast scarcely civil to Lady Baker. I am bound to say that female abused her position. She appealed to Cecilia’s picture a great deal too much during the course of breakfast. She hinted, she sighed, she wagged her head at me, and spoke about ‘that angel’ in the most tragic manner. Angel is all very well: but your angel brought in *à tout propos*; your departed blessing called out of her grave ever so many times a day; when grand-mamma wants to carry a point of her own; when the children are naughty, or noisy; when papa betrays a flickering inclination to dine at his club, or to bring home a bachelor friend or two to Shrublands:—I say your angel always dragged in by the wings into the conversation loses her effect. No man’s heart put on wider crape than Lovel’s at Cecilia’s loss. Considering the circumstances, his grief was most creditable to him; but at breakfast, at lunch, about Bulkeley the footman, about the barouche or the phaeton, or any trumpery domestic perplexity, to have a *Deus intersit* was too much. And I observed, with some inward satisfaction, that when Baker uttered her pompous funereal phrases, rolled her eyes up to the ceiling, and appealed to that quarter, the children ate their jam and quarrelled and kicked their little shins under the table, Lovel read his paper and looked at his watch to see if it was omnibus time; and Bessy made the tea, quite undisturbed by the old lady’s tragical prattle.

When Baker described her son’s fearful cough and dreadfully feverish state, I said, ‘Surely, Lady Baker, *Mr. Drencher* had better be sent for;’ and I suppose I uttered the disgusting dissyllable *Drencher* with a fine sarcastic accent; for once, just once, Bessy’s grey eyes rose through the spectacles and met mine with a glance of unutterable sadness, then calmly settled down on to the slop-basin again, or the urn, in which her pale features, of course, were odiously distorted.



'You will not bring anybody home to dinner, Frederick, in my poor boy's state?' asks Lady B.

'He may stay in his bedroom, I suppose?' replies Lovel.

'He is Cecilia's brother, Frederick!' cries the lady.

'Conf——' Lovel was beginning. What was he about to say?

'If you are going to confound your angel in heaven, I have nothing to say, sir!' cries the mother of Clarence.

'*Parbleu, madame!*' cried Lovel, in French; 'if he were not my wife's brother, do you think I would let him stay here.'

'*Parly Français? Oui, oui, oui!*' cries Pop, 'I know what pa means!'

'And so do I know. And I shall lend Uncle Clarence some books which Mr. Bonnington gave me, and——'

'Hold your tongue all!' shouts Lovel, with a stamp of his foot.

'You will, perhaps, have the great kindness to allow me the use of your carriage—or, at least, to wait here until my poor suffering boy can be moved, Mr. Lovel?' says Lady B. with the airs of a martyr.

Lovel rang the bell. 'The carriage for Lady Baker—at her ladyship's hour, Bedford: and the cart for her luggage. Her ladyship and Captain Baker are going away.'

'I have lost one child, Mr. Lovel, whom some people seem to forget. I am not going to murder another! I will not leave this house, sir, *unless you drive me from it by force*, until the medical man has seen my boy!' And here she and sorrow sat down again. She was always giving warning. She was always fitting the halter and traversing the cart, was Lady B., but she for ever declined to drop the handkerchief and have the business over. I saw by a little shrug in Bessy's shoulders, what the governess's views were of the matter: and, in a word, Lady B. no more went away on this day, than she had done on forty previous days when she announced her intention of going. She would accept benefits, you see, but then she insulted her benefactors, and so squared accounts.

That great healthy, florid, scarlet-whiskered, medical wretch came at about twelve, saw Mr. Baker, and prescribed for him: and *of course* he must have a few words with Miss Prior, and inquire into the state of her health. Just as on the previous occasion, I happened to be in the hall when Drencher went upstairs: Bedford happened to be looking out of his pantry-door: I burst into a yell of laughter when I saw Dick's livid face—the sight somehow suited my savage soul.

No sooner was Medicus gone, when Bessy, grave and pale, in

bonnet and spectacles, came sliding downstairs. I do not mean down the banister, which was Pop's favourite method of descent, but slim, tall, noiseless, in a nunlike calm, she swept down the steps. Of course, I followed her. And there was Master Bedford's nose peeping through the pantry-door at us, as we went out with the children. Pray, what business of *his* was it to be always watching anybody who walked with Miss Prior?

'So, Bessy,' I said, 'what report does Mr.—hem!—Mr. Drencher—give of the interesting invalid?'

'Oh, the most horrid! He says that Captain Baker has several times had a dreadful disease brought on by drinking, and that he is mad when he has it. He has delusions, sees demons, when he is in this state—wants to be watched.'

'Drencher tells you everything.'

She says meekly: 'He attends us when we are ill.'

I remark with fine irony: 'He attends the whole family: he is always coming to Shrublands!'

'He comes very often,' Miss Prior says, gravely.

'And do you mean to say, Bessy,' I cry, madly cutting off two or three heads of yellow broom with my stick—'do you mean to say a fellow like that, who drops his *h's* about the room, is a welcome visitor?'

'I should be very ungrateful if he were not welcome, Mr. Batchelor,' says Miss Prior. 'And call me by my surname, please—and he has taken care of all my family—and——'

'And of course, of course, of course, Miss Prior!' say I, brutally; 'and this is the way the world wags; and this is the way we are ill, and are cured; and we are grateful to the doctor that cures us!'

She nods her grave head. 'You used to be kinder to me once, Mr. Batchelor, in old days—in your—in my time of trouble! Yes, my dear, that is a beautiful bit of broom! Oh, what a fine butterfly!' (Cecilia scours the plain after the butterfly.) 'You used to be kinder to me once—when we were both unhappy.'

'I was unhappy,' I say, 'but I survived. I was ill, but I am now pretty well, thank you. I was jilted by a false, heartless woman. Do you suppose there are no other heartless women in the world?' And I am confident, if Bessy's breast had not been steel, the daggers which darted out from my eyes would have bored frightful stabs in it.

But she shook her head, and looked at me so sadly, that my eye-daggers tumbled down to the ground at once; for you see, though I am a jealous Turk, I am a very easily appeased jealous Turk; and if I had been Bluebeard, and my wife, just as I was

going to decapitate her, had lifted up her head from the block and cried a little, I should have dropped my scimitar and said, 'Come, come, Fatima, never mind for the present about that key and closet business, and I'll chop your head off some other morning.' I say, Bessy disarmed me. Pooh! I say. Women will make a fool of me to the end. Ah! ye gracious Fates! Cut my thread of life ere it grow too long. Suppose I were to live till seventy, and some little wretch of a woman were to set her cap at me? She would catch me—I know she would. All the males of our family have been spoony and soft, to a degree perfectly ludicrous and despicable to contemplate. Well, Bessy Prior, putting a hand out, looked at me, and said—

'You are the oldest and best friend I have ever had, Mr. Batchelor—the only friend.'

'Am I, Elizabeth?' I gasp, with a beating heart.

'Cissy is running back with a butterfly.' (Our hands unlock.) 'Don't you see the difficulties of my position? Don't you know that ladies are often jealous of governesses; and that unless—unless they imagined I was—I was favourable to Mr. Drencher, who is very good and kind—the ladies at Shrublands might not like my remaining alone in the house with—with—you understand?' A moment the eyes look over the spectacles; at the next, the meek bonnet bows down towards the ground.

I wonder did she hear the bump-bumping of my heart? O heart!—O wounded heart! did I ever think thou wouldst bump-bump again? 'Egl-Egl-izabeth,' I say, choking with emotion, 'do, do, do you—te-tell me—you don't—don't—don't—lo-love that apothecary?'

She shrugs her shoulder—her charming shoulder.

'And if,' I hotly continue, 'if a gentleman—if a man of mature age certainly, but who has a kind heart and four hundred a year of his own—were to say to you, "Elizabeth! will you bid the flowers of a blighted life to bloom again?" Elizabeth! will you soothe a wounded heart?'

'Oh, Mr. Batchelor!' she sighed, and then added quickly, 'Please, don't take my hand. Here's Pop.'

And that dear child (bless him) came up at the moment, saying, 'Oh, Miss Prior! look here! I've got such a jolly big toadstool!' And next came Cissy, with a confounded butterfly. O Richard the Third! Haven't you been maligned because you smother two little nuisances in a Tower. What is to prove to me that you did not serve the little brutes right, and that you weren't a most humane man? Darling Cissy coming up, then, in her dear, charming way, says, 'You shan't take Mr. Batchelor's



BESSY'S REFLECTIONS.

hand, you shall take *my* hand!’ And she tosses up her little head, and walks with the instructress of her youth.

‘*Ces enfans ne comprennent guère le Français,*’ says Miss Prior, speaking very rapidly.

‘*Après lonche ?*’ I whisper. The fact is, I was so agitated I hardly knew what the French for lunch was. And then our conversation dropped : and the beating of my own heart was all the sound I heard.

Lunch came. I couldn’t eat a bit : I should have choked. Bessy ate plenty, and drank a glass of beer. It was her dinner, to be sure. Young *Blacksheep* did not appear. We did not miss him. When Lady Baker began to tell her story of George IV. at Slane Castle, I went into my own room. I took a book. Books ? Psha ! I went into the garden. I took out a cigar. But no, I would not smoke it. Perhaps she—many people don’t like smoking.

I went into the garden. ‘Come into the garden, Maud.’ I sat by a large lilac bush. I waited. Perhaps she would come. The morning-room windows were wide open on to the lawn. Will she never come ? Ah ! what is that tall form advancing ? gliding—gliding into the chamber like a beauteous ghost ? Who does most like an angel show, you may be sure ’tis she. She comes up to the glass, she lays her spectacles down on the mantelpiece. She puts a slim white hand over her auburn hair and looks into the mirror. Elizabeth, Elizabeth ! I come !

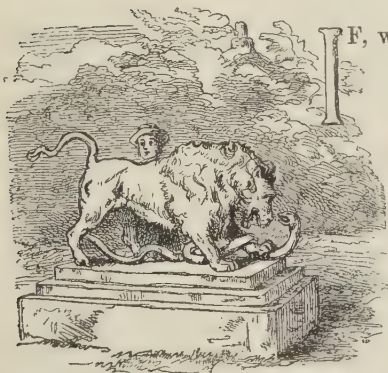
As I came up, I saw a horrid little grinning, debauched face surge over the back of a great arm-chair and look towards Elizabeth. It was Captain *Blacksheep*, of course. He laid his elbows over the chair. He looked keenly and with a diabolical smile at the unconscious girl ; and just as I reached the window, he cried out, ‘*Bessy Bellenden, by Jove !*’

Elizabeth turned round, gave a little cry, and—but what happened I shall tell in the ensuing chapter.



## CHAPTER V.

### IN WHICH I AM STUNG BY A SERPENT.



IF, when I heard Baker call out Bessy Bellenden, and adjure Jove, he had run forward and seized Elizabeth by the waist, or offered her other personal indignity, I too should have run forward on my side and engaged him. Though I am a stout elderly man, short in stature and in wind, I know I am a match for *that* rickety little captain on his high-heeled boots. A match for him?

I believe Miss Bessy would have been a match for both of us. Her white arm was as hard and polished as ivory. Had she held it straight pointed against the rush of the dragoon, he would have fallen backwards before his intended prey: I have no doubt he would. It was the hen, in this case, was stronger than the libertine fox, and *au besoin* would have pecked the little marauding vermin's eyes out. Had, I say, Partlet been weak, and Reynard strong, I *would* have come forward: I certainly would. Had he been a wolf now, instead of a fox, I am certain I should have run in upon him, grappled with him, torn his heart and tongue out of his black throat, and trampled the lawless brute to death.

Well, I didn't do any such thing. I was just *going* to run in, —and I didn't. I was just going to rush to Bessy's side to clasp her (I have no doubt) to my heart: to beard the whiskered champion who was before her, and perhaps say, 'Cheer thee—cheer thee, my persecuted maiden, my beauteous love—my Rebecca! Come on, Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, thou dastard

Templar! It is I, Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe.' (By the way, though the fellow was not a *Templar*, he was a *Lincoln's Inn man*, having passed twice through the Insolvent Court there with infinite discredit.) But I made no heroic speeches. There was no need for Rebecca to jump out of window and risk her lovely neck. How could she, in fact, the French window being flush with the ground floor? And I give you my honour, just as I was crying my war-cry, couching my lance, and rushing *à la recousse* upon Sir Baker, a sudden thought made me drop my (figurative) point: a sudden idea made me rein in my galloping (metaphorical) steed, and spare Baker for that time.

Suppose I had gone in? But for that sudden precaution, there might have been a Mrs. Batchelor. I might have been a bullied father of ten children. (Elizabeth has a fine high temper of her own.) What is four hundred and twenty a year, with a wife and perhaps half-a-dozen children? Should I have been a whit the happier? Would Elizabeth! Ah! no. And yet I feel a certain sort of shame, even now, when I think that I didn't go in. Not that I was in a fright, as some people choose to hint. I swear I was not. But the reason why I did not charge was this:—

Nay, I did charge part of the way, and then, I own, stopped. It was an error in judgment. It wasn't a want of courage. Lord George Sackville was a brave man, and as cool as a cucumber under fire. Well, *he* didn't charge at the battle of Minden, and Prince Ferdinand made the deuce and all of a disturbance, as we know. Byng was a brave man,—and I ask, wasn't it a confounded shame executing him? So with respect to myself. Here is my statement. I make it openly. I don't care. I am accused of seeing a woman insulted, and not going to her rescue. I am not guilty, I say. That is, there were reasons which caused me not to attack. Even putting aside the superior strength of Elizabeth herself to the enemy—I vow there were cogent and honourable reasons why I did not charge home.

You see I happened to be behind a blue lilac bush (and was turning a rhyme—heaven help us!—in which *death* was only to part me and Elizabeth) when I saw Baker's face surge over the chair-back. I rush forward as he cries 'by Jove.' Had Miss Prior cried out on her part, the strength of twenty Heenans, I know, would have nerved this arm; but all she did was to turn pale, and say 'Oh, mercy! Captain Baker! Do pity me!'

'What! you remember me, Bessy Bellenden, do you?' asks the captain, advancing.

'Oh, not that name! please, not that name!' cries Bessy.

'I thought I knew you yesterday,' says Baker. 'Only, gad, you see, I had so much claret on board, I did not much know what was what. And oh! Bessy, I have got such a splitter of a headache.'

'Oh, please—please, my name is Miss Prior. Pray! pray, sir, don't——'

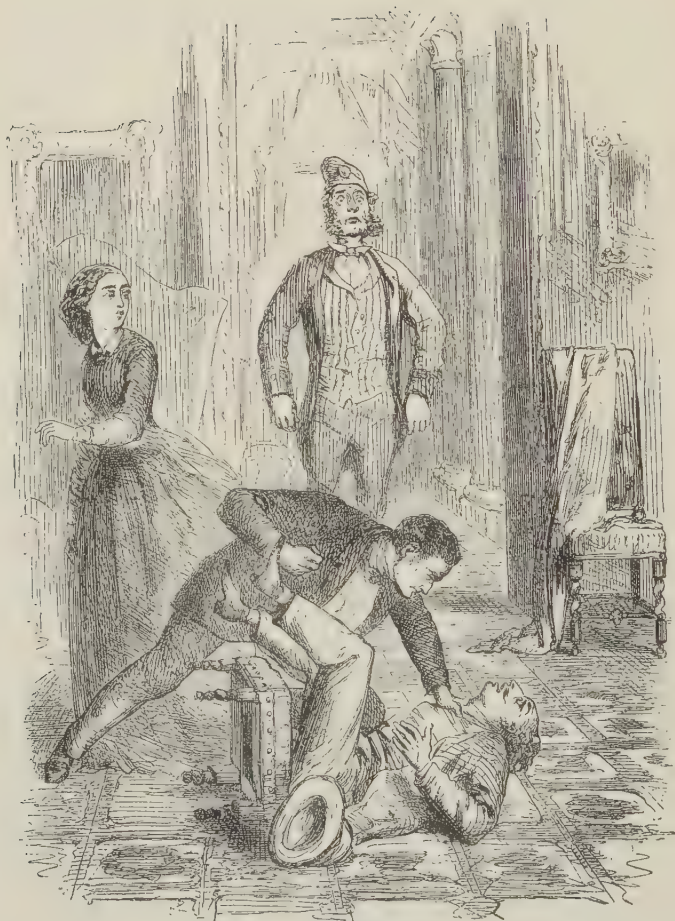
'You've got handsomer—doosid deal handsomer. Know you now well, your spectacles off. You come in here—teach my nephew and niece, humbug my sister, make love to the sh—— Oh! you uncommon sly little toad!'

'Captain Baker, I beg—I implore you,' says Bess, or something of the sort: for the white hands assumed an attitude of supplication.

'Pooh! don't gammon *me*!' says the rickety captain (or words to that effect), and seizes those two firm white hands in his moist, trembling palms.

Now do you understand why I paused? When the dandy came grinning forward, with looks and gestures of familiar recognition: when the pale Elizabeth implored him to spare her:—a keen arrow of jealousy shot whizzing through my heart, and caused me well-nigh to fall backwards as I ran forwards. I bumped up against a bronze group in the gardens. The group represented a lion stung by a serpent. I was a lion stung by a serpent too. Even Baker could have knocked me down. Fiends and anguish! he had known her before? The Academy, the life she had led, the wretched old tipsy, ineffective guardian of a father—all these antecedents in poor Bessy's history passed through my mind. And I had offered my heart and troth to this woman! Now, my dear sir, I appeal to you. What would *you* have done? Would *you* have liked to have such a sudden suspicion thrown over the being of your affection? 'Oh, spare me—spare me,' I heard her say, in clear—too clear—pathetic tones. And then there came rather a shrill 'Ah!' and then the lion was up in my breast again, and I give you my honour, just as I was going to step forward—to step—to *rush* forward from behind the urn where I had stood for a moment with thumping heart, Bessy's 'Ah!' or little cry was followed by a *whack*, which I heard as clear as anything I ever heard in my life;—and I saw the little captain spin back, topple over a chair heels up, and in this posture heard him begin to scream and curse in shrill tones. . . .

Not for long, for as the captain and the chair tumble down, a door springs open—a man rushes in, who pounces like a panther upon the prostrate captain, pitches into his nose and eyes, and



BEDFORD TO THE RESCUE.

chokes his bad language by sending a fist down his naughty throat.

‘Oh, thank you, Bedford!—please, leave him, Bedford! that’s enough. There, don’t hurt him any more!’ says Bessy, laughing—laughing, upon my word.

‘Ah! will you?’ says Bedford. ‘Lie still, you little beggar, or I’ll knock your head off. Look here, Miss Prior! Elizabeth—dear—dear Elizabeth! I love you with all my heart, and soul, and strength—I do.’

‘O Bedford, Bedford!’ warbles Elizabeth.

‘I do! I can’t help it. I must say it! Ever since Rome, I do. Lie still, you drunken little beast! It’s no use. But I adore you, O Elizabeth! Elizabeth!’ And there was Dick, who was always following Miss P. about, and poking his head into keyholes to spy her, actually making love to her over the prostrate body of the captain.

Now, what was I to do? Wasn’t I in a most confoundedly awkward situation. A lady had been attacked—a lady?—*the* lady, and I hadn’t rescued her. Her insolent enemy was overthrown, and I hadn’t done it. A champion, three inches shorter than myself, had come in, and dealt the blow. I was in such a rage of mortification, that I should have liked to thrash the captain and Bedford too. The first I know I could have matched; the second was a tough little hero. And it was he who rescued the damsel, whilst I stood by! In a strait so odious, sudden, and humiliating, what should I, what could I, what did I do?

Behind the lion and snake there is a brick wall and marble balustrade, built for no particular reason, but flanking three steps and a grassy terrace, which then rises up on a level to the house windows. Beyond the balustrade is a shrubbery of more lilacs and so forth, by which you can walk round into another path, which also leads up to the house. So as I had not charged—ah! woe is me!—as the battle was over, I—I just went round that shrubbery into the other path and so entered the house, arriving like Fortinbras in *Hamlet*, when everybody is dead and sprawling, you know, and the whole business is done.

And was there to be no end to my shame, or to Bedford’s laurels? In that brief interval, whilst I was walking round the by-path (just to give myself a pretext for entering coolly into the premises), this fortunate fellow had absolutely engaged another and larger champion. This was no other than Bulkeley, my Lady B.’s first-class attendant. When the captain fell amidst his screams and curses, he called for Bulkeley: and that individual



made his appearance, with a little Scotch cap perched on his powdered head.

‘Hullo! what’s the row year?’ says Goliath, entering.

‘Kill that blackguard! Hang him, kill him!’ screams Captain Blacksheep, rising with bleeding nose.

‘I say, what’s the row year?’ asks the grenadier.

‘Off with your cap, sir, before a lady!’ calls out Bedford.

‘Hoff with my cap! you be blo——’

But he said no more, for little Bedford jumped some two feet from the ground, and knocked the cap off, so that a cloud of ambrosial powder filled the room with violet odours. The immense frame of the giant shook at this insult: ‘I will be the death on you, you little beggar!’ he grunted out; and was advancing to destroy Dick, just as I entered in the cloud which his head had raised.

‘I’ll knock the brains as well as the powder out of your ugly head!’ says Bedford, springing at the poker. At which juncture I entered.

‘What—what is this disturbance?’ I say, advancing with an air of mingled surprise and resolution.

‘You git out of the way till I knock his ’ead off!’ roars Bulkeley.

‘Take up your cap, sir, and leave the room,’ I say, still with the same elegant firmness.

‘Put down that there poker, you coward!’ bellows the monster on board wages.

‘Miss Prior!’ I say (like a dignified hypocrite, as I own I was), ‘I hope no one has offered you a rudeness?’ And I glare round, first at the knight of the bleeding nose, and then at his squire.

Miss Prior’s face, as she replied to me, wore a look of awful scorn.

‘Thank you, sir,’ she said, turning her head over her shoulders, and looking at me with her grey eyes. ‘Thank you, Richard Bedford! God bless you! I shall ever be thankful to you, wherever I am!’ And the stately figure swept out of the room.

She had seen me behind that confounded statue, then, and I had not come to her! O torments and racks! O scorpions, fiends, and pitchforks! The face of Bedford, too (flashing with knightly gratitude anon as she spoke kind words to him and passed on), wore a look of scorn as he turned towards me, and then stood, his nostrils distended, and breathing somewhat hard, glaring at his enemies, and still grasping his mace of battle.

When Elizabeth was gone, there was a pause of a moment,

and then Blacksheep, taking his bleeding cambric from his nose, shrieks out, 'Kill him, I say! A fellow that dares to hit one in my condition, and when I'm down! Bulkeley, you great hulking jackass! kill him, I say!'

'Jest let him put that there poker down, that's hall,' growls Bulkeley.

'You're afraid, you great cowardly beast! You shall go, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em—Mr. Bedford—you shall have the sack, sir, as sure as your name is what it is! I'll tell my brother-in-law everything; and as for that woman——'

'If you say a word against her, I'll cane you wherever I see you, Captain Baker!' I cry out.

'Who spoke to *you*?' says the captain, falling back and scowling at me.

'Who hever told you to put *your* foot in,' says the squire.

I was in such a rage, and so eager to find an object on which I might wreak my fury, that I confess I plunged at this Bulkeley. I gave him two most violent blows on the waistcoat, which caused him to double up with such frightful contortions, that Bedford burst out laughing; and even the captain with the damaged eye and nose began to laugh too. Then, taking a lesson from Dick, as there was a fine shining dagger on the table, used for the cutting open of reviews and magazines, I seized and brandished this weapon, and I daresay would have sheathed it in the giant's bloated corpus, had he made any movement towards me. But he only called out, 'h'I'll be the death on you, you cowards! h'I'll be the death of both on you!' and snatching up his cap from the carpet, walked out of the room.

'Glad you did that, though,' says Baker, nodding his head. 'Think I'd best pack up.'

And now the Devil of Rage which had been swelling within me gave place to a worse devil—the Devil of Jealousy—and I turned on the captain, who was also just about to slink away:—

'Stop!' I cried out—I screamed out, I may say.

'Who spoke to you, I should like to know? and who the dooce dares to speak to me in that sort of way?' says Clarence Baker, with a plentiful garnish of expletives, which need not be here inserted. But he stopped, nevertheless, and turned slouching round.

'You spoke just now of Miss Prior?' I said. 'Have you anything against her?'

'What's that to you?' he asked.

'I am her oldest friend. I introduced her into this family. Dare you say a word against her?'

'Well, who the dooce has?'

'You knew her before?'

'Yes, I did, then.'

'When she went by the name of Bellenden?'

'Of course, I did. And what's that to you?' he screams out.

'I this day asked her to be my wife, sir! *That's* what it is to me!' I replied, with severe dignity.

Mr. Clarence began to whistle. 'Oh! if that's it—of course not!' he says.

The jealous demon writhed within me and rent me.

'You mean that there *is* something then?' I asked, glaring at the young reprobate.

'No, I don't,' says he, looking very much frightened. 'No, there is nothin'. Upon my sacred honour, there isn't, that I know.' (I was looking uncommonly fierce at this time, and I must own, would rather have quarrelled with somebody than not.) 'No, there *is* nothin' that I know. Ever so many years ago, you see, I used to go with Tom Papillion, Turkington, and two or three fellows to that theatre. Dolphin had it. And we used to go behind the scenes—and—and I own I had a row with her. And I was in the wrong. There now, I own I was. And she left the theatre. And she behaved quite right. And I was very sorry. And I believe she is as good a woman as ever stepped now. And the father was a disreputable old man, but most honourable—I know he was. And there was a fellow in the Bombay service—a fellow by the name of Walker or Walkingham—yes, Walkingham: and I used to meet him at the Cave of Harmony, you know; and he told me that she was as right as right could be. And he was doosidly cut up about leaving her. And he would have married her, I dessay, only for his father the general, who wouldn't stand it. And he was ready to hang himself when he went away. He used to drink awfully, and then he used to swear about her; and we used to chaff him, you know. Low, vulgarish sort of man, he was; and a very passionate fellow. And if you're goin' to marry her, you know—of course, I ask your pardon, and that; and upon the honour of a gentleman I know nothin' against her. And I wish you joy and all that sort of thing. I do really now!' And so saying, the mean mischievous little monkey sneaked away, and clambered up to his own perch in his own bedroom.

Worthy Mrs. Bonnington, with a couple of her young ones, made her appearance at this juncture. She had a key, which gave her a free pass through the garden-door, and brought her children for an afternoon's play and fighting with their little nephew and niece. Decidedly, Bessy did not bring up her young

folks well. Was it that their grandmothers spoiled them, and undid the governess's work. Were those young people odious (as they often were) by nature, or rendered so by the neglect of their guardians? If Bessy had loved her charges more, would they not have been better? Had she a kind, loving, maternal heart? Ha! This thought—this jealous doubt—smote my bosom: and were she mine, and the mother of many possible little Batchelors, would she be kind to *them*? Would they be wilful, and selfish, and abominable little wretches, in a word, like these children? Nay—nay! Say that Elizabeth has but a cold heart; we cannot be all perfection. But, *per contra*, you must admit that, cold as she is, she does her duty. How good she has been to her own brothers and sisters: how cheerfully she has given away her savings to them: how admirably she has behaved to her mother, hiding the iniquities of that disreputable old schemer, and covering her improprieties with decent filial screens and pretexts. Her mother? Ah! *grands dieux*! You want to marry, Charles Batchelor, and you will have that greedy pauper for a mother-in-law; that fluffy Bluecoat boy, those hob-nailed taw-players, top-spinners, toffee-eaters, those underbred girls, for your brothers and sisters-in-law. They will be quartered upon you. You are so absurdly weak and good-natured—you know you are—that you will never be able to resist. Those boys will grow up: they will go out as clerks or shop-boys: get into debt, and expect you to pay their bills: want to be articled to attornies and so forth, and call upon you for the premium. Their mother will never be out of your house. She will ferret about in your drawers and wardrobes, filch your haberdashery, and cast greedy eyes on the very shirts and coats on your back, and calculate when she can get them for her boys. Those vulgar young miscreants will never fail to come and dine with you on a Sunday. They will bring their young linendraper or articled friends. They will draw bills on you, or give their own to money-lenders, and unless you take up those bills they will consider you a callous, avaricious brute, and the heartless author of their ruin. The girls will come and practise on your wife's piano. *They* won't come to you on Sundays only; they will always be staying in the house. They will always be preventing a *tête-à-tête* between your wife and you. As they grow old, they will want her to take them out to tea-parties, and to give such entertainments, where they will introduce their odious young men. They will expect you to commit meannesses, in order to get theatre tickets for them from the newspaper editors of your acquaintances. You will have to sit in the back seat: to pay the cab to and from the play: to see

glances and bows of recognition passing between them and dubious bucks in the lobbies: and to lend the girls your wife's gloves, scarfs, ornaments, smelling-bottles, and handkerchiefs, which of course they will never return. If Elizabeth is ailing from any circumstance, they will get a footing in your house, and she will be jealous of them. The ladies of your own family will quarrel with them, of course; and very likely your mother-in-law will tell them a piece of her mind. And you bring this dreary certainty upon you, because, forsooth, you fall in love with a fine figure, a pair of grey eyes, and a head of auburn (not to say red) hair! O Charles Batchelor! in what a galley hast thou seated thyself, and what a family is crowded in thy boat!

All these thoughts are passing in my mind, as good Mrs. Bonnington is prattling to me—I protest I don't know about what! I think I caught some faint sentences about the Patagonian mission, the National schools, and Mr. Bonnington's lumbago; but I can't say for certain. I was busy with my own thoughts. I had asked the awful question—I was not answered. Bessy had even gone away in a huff about my want of gallantry, but I was easy on that score. As for Mr. Drencher, she had told me her sentiments regarding him; and though I am considerably older, yet thought I, I need not be afraid of *that* rival. But when she says yes? Oh dear, oh dear! *Yes* means Elizabeth—certainly, a brave young woman—but it means Mrs. Prior, and Gus, and Amelia Jane, and the whole of that dismal family. No wonder, with these dark thoughts crowding my mind, Mrs. Bonnington found me absent; and, as a comment upon some absurd reply of mine, said, 'La! Mr. Batchelor, you must be crossed in love!' Crossed in love. It might be as well for some folks if they *were* crossed in love. At my age, and having loved madly, as I did, that party in Dublin, a man doesn't take the second fit by any means so strongly. Well! well! the die was cast, and I was there to bide the hazard. What can be the matter? I look pale and unwell, and had better see Mr. D.? Thank you, my dear Mrs. Bonnington. I had a violent—a violent toothache last night—yes, toothache; and was kept awake, thank you. And there's nothing like having it out? and Mr. D. draws them beautifully, and has taken out six of your children's? It's better now; I daresay it will be better still, soon. I retire to my chamber: I take a book—can't read one word of it. I resume my tragedy. Tragedy. Bosh!

I suppose Mr. Drencher thought his yesterday's patient would be better for a little more advice and medicine, for he must pay a second visit to Shrublands on this day, just after the row with



the captain had taken place, and walked up to the upper regions, as his custom was. Very likely he found Mr. Clarence bathing his nose there, and prescribed for the injured organ. Certainly he knocked at the door of Miss Prior's schoolroom (the fellow was always finding a pretext for entering *that* apartment), and Master Bedford comes to me, with a woebegone, livid countenance, and a 'Ha! ha! young Sawbones is up with her!'

'So, my poor Dick,' I say, 'I heard your confession as I was myself running in to rescue Miss P. from that villain.'

'My blood was hup,' groans Dick—'up, I beg your pardon. When I saw that young rascal lay a hand on her I could not help flying at him. I would have hit him if he had been my own father. And I could not help saying what was on my mind. It would come out; I knew it would some day. I might as well wish for the moon as hope to get her. She thinks herself superior to me, and perhaps she is mistaken. But it's no use; she don't care for me; she don't care for anybody. Now the words are out, in course I mustn't stay here.'

'You may get another place easily enough with your character, Bedford.'

But he shook his head. 'I'm not disposed to black nobody else's boots no more. I have another place. I have saved a bit of money. My poor old mother is gone, whom you used to be so kind to, Mr. B. I'm alone now. Confound that Sawbones, will he *never* come away? I'll tell you about my plans some day, sir, and I know you'll be so good as to help me.' And away goes Dick, looking the picture of woe and despair.

Presently, from the upper rooms, Sawbones descends. I happened to be standing in the hall, you see, talking to Dick. Mr. Drencher scowls at me fiercely, and I suppose I return him haughty glance for glance. He hated me: I him: I liked him to hate me.

'How is your patient, Mr.—a—Drencher?' I ask.

'Trifling contusion of the nose—brown paper and vinegar,' says the doctor.

'Great powers! did the villain strike her on the nose?' I cry in terror.

'*Her*—whom?' says he.

'Oh—ah—yes—indeed; it's nothing,' I say, smiling. The fact is, I had forgotten about Baker in my natural anxiety for Elizabeth.

'I don't know what you mean by laughing, sir?' says the red-haired practitioner. 'But if you mean chaff, Mr. Batchelor, let me tell you I don't want chaff, and I won't have chaff!' and herewith, *cuit* Sawbones, looking black doses at me.

Jealous of me, think I, as I sink down in a chair in the morning-room, where the combat had just taken place. And so, thou, too, art fever-caught, my poor physician! What a fascination this girl has. Here's the butler: here's the medical man: here am I: here is the captain has been smitten—smitten on the nose. Has the gardener been smitten too, and is the page gnawing his buttons off for jealousy, and is Mons. Bulkeley equally in love with her! I take up a review, and think over this, as I glance through its pages.

As I am lounging and reading, Mons. Bulkeley himself makes his appearance, bearing in cloaks and packages belonging to his lady. 'Have the goodness to take that cap off,' I say, coldly.

'*You* 'ave the goodness to remember that if hever I see you hout o' this 'ouse I'll punch your hugly 'ead off,' says the monstrous menial. But I poise my paper-cutter, and he retires growling.

From despondency I pass to hope; and the prospect of marriage, which before appeared so dark to me, assumes a gayer hue. I have four hundred a year, and that house in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury Square, of which the upper part will be quite big enough for us. If we have children, there is Queen Square for them to walk and play in. Several genteel families I know, who still live in the neighbourhood, will come and see my wife, and we shall have a comfortable, cosy little society, suited to our small means. The tradesmen in Lamb's Conduit Street are excellent, and the music at the Foundling always charming. I shall give up one of my clubs. The other is within an easy walk.

No: my wife's relations will *not* plague me. Bessy is a most sensible, determined woman, and as cool a hand as I know. She will only see Mrs. Prior at proper (and, I trust, distant) intervals. Her brothers and sisters will learn to know their places, and not obtrude upon me or the company which I keep. My friends, who are educated people and gentlemen, will not object to visit me because I live over a shop (my ground-floor and spacious back premises in Devonshire Street are let to a German toy-warehouse). I shall add a hundred or two at least to my income by my literary labour; and Bessy, who has practised frugality all her life, and been a good daughter and a good sister, I know will prove a good wife, and, please heaven! a good mother. Why, four hundred a year, *plus* two hundred, is a nice little income. And my old college friend, Wigmore, who is just on the Bench? He will, he must get me a place—say, three hundred a year. With nine hundred a year we can do quite well.

Love is full of elations and despondencies. The future, over which such a black cloud of doubt lowered a few minutes since, blushed a sweet rose-colour now. I saw myself happy, beloved, with a competence, and imagined myself reposing in the delightful garden of Red Lion Square on some summer evening, and half a dozen little Batchelors frisking over the flower-bespangled grass there.

After our little colloquy, Mrs. Bonnington, not finding much pleasure in my sulky society, had gone to Miss Prior's room with her young folks, and as the door of the morning-room opened now and again, I could hear the dear young ones scuttling about the passages, where they were playing at horses and fighting and so forth. After a while good Mrs. B. came down from the school-room. 'Whatever has happened, Mr. Batchelor?' she said to me, in her passage through the morning-room. 'Miss Prior is very pale and absent. *You* are very pale and absent. Have you been courting her, you naughty man, and trying to supplant Mr. Drencher? There now, you turn as red as my ribbon! Ah! Bessy is a good girl, and so fond of my dear children. "Ah, dear Mrs. Bonnington," she says to me—but of course you won't tell Lady B., it would make Lady B. perfectly furious. "Ah!" says Miss P. to me, "I wish, ma'am, that my little charges were like their dear little nephews and nieces—so exquisitely brought up!" Pop again wished to beat his uncle. I wish—I wish Frederick would send that child to school! Miss P. owns that he is too much for her. Come, children, it is time to go to dinner.' And, with more of this prattle, the good lady summons her young ones, who descend from the schoolroom with their nephew and niece.

Following nephew and niece comes demure Miss Prior, to whom I fling a knowing glance, which says, plain as eyes can speak—Do, Elizabeth, come and talk for a little to your faithful Batchelor! She gives a sidelong look of intelligence, leaves a parasol and a pair of gloves on a table, accompanies Mrs. Bonnington and the young ones into the garden, sees the clergyman's wife and children disappear through the garden-gate, and her own youthful charges engaged in the strawberry-beds; and, of course, returns to the morning-room for her parasol and gloves, which she had forgotten. There is a calmness about that woman—an easy, dauntless dexterity, which frightens me—*ma parole d'honneur*. In that white breast is there a white marble stone in place of the ordinary cordial apparatus? Under the white velvet glove of that cool hand are there bones of cold steel?

'So Drencher has again been here, Elizabeth?' I say.

She shrugs her shoulders. 'To see that wretched Captain Baker. The horrid little man will die. He was not actually sober just now when he—when I—when you saw him. How I wish you had come sooner—to prevent that horrible, tipsy, disreputable quarrel. It makes me very, very thoughtful, Mr. Batchelor. He will speak to his mother—to Mr. Lovel. I shall have to go away. I know I must!'

'And don't you know where you can find a home, Elizabeth? Have the words I spoke this morning been so soon forgotten?'

'Oh! Mr. Batchelor! you spoke in a heat. You could not think seriously of a poor girl like me, so friendless and poor, with so many family ties. Pop is looking this way, please. To a man bred like you, what can I be?'

'You may make the rest of my life happy, Elizabeth?' I cry. 'We are friends of such old—old date, that you know what my disposition is.'

'Oh! indeed,' says she, 'it is certain that there never was a sweeter disposition or a more gentle creature.' (Somehow I thought she said the words 'gentle creature' with rather a sarcastic tone of voice.) 'But consider your habits, dear sir. I remember how in Beak Street you used to be always giving, and in spite of your income, always poor. You love ease and elegance; and having, I daresay, not too much for yourself now, would you encumber yourself with—with me and the expenses of a household? I shall always regard you, esteem you, love you as the best friend I ever had, and—*voici venir la mère du vaurien.*'

Enter Lady Baker. 'Do I interrupt a *tête-à-tête*, pray?' she asks.

'My benefactor has known me since I was a child, and befriended me since then,' says Elizabeth, with simple kindness beaming in her look. 'We were just speaking—I was just—ah! telling him that my uncle has invited me most kindly to St. Boniface, whenever I can be spared; and if you and the family go to the Isle of Wight this autumn, perhaps you will intercede with Mr. Lovel, and let me have a little holiday. Mary will take every charge of the children, and I do so long to see my dear aunt and cousins. And I was begging Mr. Batchelor to use his interest with you, and to entreat you to use *your* interest to get me leave. That was what our talk was about.'

The deuce it was! I couldn't say 'No,' of course; but I protest I had no idea until that moment that our conversation had been about aunt and uncle at St. Boniface. Again came the horrible suspicion, the dreadful doubt—the chill as of a cold serpent

crawling down my back—which had made me pause, and gasp, and turn pale, anon when Bessy and Captain Clarence were holding colloquy together. What *has* happened in this woman's life? Do I know all about her, or anything; or only just as much as she chooses? O Batch!—Batch! I suspect you are no better than an old gaby!

'And Mr. Drencher has just been here and seen your son,' Bessy continues, softly; 'and he begs and entreats your ladyship to order Captain Baker to be more prudent. Mr. D. says Captain Baker is shortening his life, indeed he is, by his carelessness.'

There is Mr. Lovel coming from the City, and the children are running to their papa! And Miss Prior makes her patroness a meek curtsy, and demurely slides away from the room. With a sick heart I say to myself, 'She has been—yes—humbugging is the word—humbugging Lady B. Elizabeth! Elizabeth! can it be possible thou art humbugging *me* too?'

Before Lovel enters, Bedford rapidly flits through the room. He looks as pale as a ghost. His face is awfully gloomy.

'Here's the governor come,' Dick whispers to me. 'It must all come hout now—out, I beg your pardon. So she's caught *you*, has she? I thought she would.' And he grins a ghastly grin.

'What do you mean?' I ask, and I daresay turn rather red.

'I know all about it. I'll speak to you to-night, sir. Confound her! confound her!' and he doubles his knuckles into his eyes, and rushes out of the room over Buttons, entering with the afternoon tea.

'What on earth's the matter, and why are you knocking the things about?' Lovel asks at dinner of his butler, who, indeed, acted as one distraught. A savage gloom was depicted on Bedford's usually melancholy countenance, and the blunders in his service were many. With his brother-in-law Lovel did not exchange many words. Clarence was not yet forgiven for his escapade two days previous. And when Lady Baker cried, 'Mercy, child! what have you done to yourself?' and the captain replied, 'Knocked my face against a dark door—made my nose bleed,' Lovel did not look up or express a word of sympathy. 'If the fellow knocked his worthless head off, I should not be sorry,' the widower murmured to me. Indeed the tone of the captain's voice, his *ton*, and his manners in general were specially odious to Mr. Lovel, who could put up with the tyranny of women, but revolted against the vulgarity and assumption of certain men.



As yet nothing had been said about the morning's quarrel. Here we were all sitting with a sword hanging over our heads, smiling and chatting, and talking cookery, politics, the weather, and what not. Bessy was perfectly cool and dignified at tea. Danger or doubt did not seem to affect *her*. If she had been ordered for execution at the end of the evening, she would have made the tea, played her Beethoven, answered questions in her usual voice, and glided from one to another with her usual dignified calm, until the hour of decapitation came, when she would have made her curtsey, and gone out and had the amputation performed quite quietly and neatly. I admired her, I was frightened before her. The cold snake crept more than ever down my back as I meditated on her. I made such awful blunders at whist that even good Mrs. Bonnington lost her temper with her fourteen shillings. Miss Prior would have played her hand out, and never made a fault, you may be sure. She retired at her accustomed hour. Mrs. Bonnington had her glass of negus, and withdrew too. Lovel keeping his eyes sternly on the captain, that officer could only get a little sherry and seltzer, and went to bed sober. Lady Baker folded Lovel in her arms, a process to which my poor friend very humbly submitted. Everybody went to bed, and no tales were told of the morning's doings. There was a respite, and no execution could take place till to-morrow at any rate. Put on thy night-cap, Damocles, and slumber for to-night, at least. Thy slumbers will not be cut short by the awful Chopper of Fate.

Perhaps you may ask what need had *I* to be alarmed? Nothing could happen to me. I was not going to lose a governess's place. Well, if I must tell the truth, I had not acted with entire candour in the matter of Bessy's appointment. In recommending her to Lovel and the late Mrs. L., I had answered for her probity, and so forth, with all my might. I had described the respectability of her family, her father's campaigns, her grandfather's (old Dr. Sargent's) celebrated sermons; and had enlarged with the utmost eloquence upon the learning and high character of her uncle, the Master of Boniface, and the deserved regard he bore his niece. But that part of Bessy's biography which related to the Academy I own I had not touched upon. *A quoi bon?* Would every gentleman or lady like to have everything told about him or her? I had kept the Academy dark then; and so had brave Dick Bedford the butler; and, should that miscreant captain reveal the secret, I knew there would be an awful commotion in the building. I should have to incur Lovel's not unjust reproaches for *suppressio veri*, and the

anger of those two *viragines*, the grandmothers of Lovel's children. I was more afraid of the women than of him, though conscience whispered me that I had not acted quite rightly by my friend.

When, then, the bed-candles were lighted, and every one said good-night, 'Oh, Captain Baker,' say I, gaily, and putting on a confoundedly hypocritical grin, 'if you will come into my room, I will give you that book.'

'What book?' says Baker.

'The book we were talking of this morning.'

'Hang me, if I know what you mean,' says he. And luckily for me, Lovel giving a shrug of disgust, and a good-night to me, stalked out of the room, bed-candle in hand. No doubt, he thought his wretch of a brother-in-law did not well remember after dinner what he had done or said in the morning.

As I now had the Blacksheep to myself, I said calmly, 'You are quite right. There was no talk of a book at all, Captain Baker. But I wished to see you alone, and impress upon you my earnest wish that everything which occurred this morning—mind, *everything*—should be considered as strictly private, and *should be confided to no person whatever*—you understand?—to no person.'

'Confound me,' Baker breaks out, 'if I understand what you mean by your books and your "strictly private." I shall speak what I choose—hang me!'

'In that case, sir,' I said, 'will you have the goodness to send a friend of yours to my friend Captain Fitz-Boodle? I must consider the matter as personal between ourselves. You insulted, and, as I find now, for the second time—a lady whose relations to me you know. You have given neither to her, nor to me, the apology to which we are both entitled. You refuse even to promise to be silent regarding a painful scene which was occasioned by your own brutal and cowardly behaviour; and you must abide by the consequences, sir! you must abide by the consequences!' And I glared at him over my flat candlestick.

'Curse me!—and hang me!—and,' etc. etc. etc., he says, 'if I know what all this is about. What the dooce do you talk to *me* about books, and about silence, and apologies, and sending Captain Fitz-Boodle to me? *I* don't want to see Captain Fitz-Boodle—great fat brute! *I* know him perfectly well.'

'Hush!' say I, 'here's Bedford.' In fact, Dick appeared at this juncture, to close the house and put the lamps out.

But Captain Clarence only spoke or screamed louder. 'What do I care about who hears me? That fellow insulted me already to-day, and I'd have pitched his life out of him, only I was down, and I'm so confounded weak and nervous, and just out of my

fever—and—and hang it all! what are you driving at, Mr What's-your-name?' And the wretched little creature cries almost as he speaks.

'Once for all, will you agree that the affair about which we spoke shall go no farther?' I say, as stern as Draco.

'I shan't say anythin' about it. I wish you'd leave me alone, you fellows, and not come botherin'. I wish I could get a glass of brandy-and-water up in my bedroom. I tell you I can't sleep without it,' whimpers the wretch.

'Sorry I laid hands on you, sir,' says Bedford, sadly. 'It wasn't worth the while. Go to bed, and I'll get you something warm.'

'Will you, though? I couldn't sleep without it. Do now—do now! and I won't say anythin'—I won't now—on the honour of a gentleman, I won't. Good night, Mr. What-d'ye-call——' And Bedford leads the helot to his chamber.

'I've got him in bed; and I've given him a dose; and I put some laudanum in it. He ain't been out. He has not had much to-day,' says Bedford, coming back to my room, with his face ominously pale.

'You have given him laudanum?' I ask.

'*Sawbones* gave him some yesterday—told me to give him a little—forty drops,' growls Bedford.

Then the gloomy major-domo puts a hand into each waistcoat pocket, and looks at me. 'You want to fight for her, do you, sir? Calling out, and that sort of game? Phoo!'—and he laughs scornfully.

'The little miscreant is too despicable, I own,' say I, 'and it's absurd for a peaceable fellow like me to talk about powder and shot at this time of day. But what could I do?'

'I say it's *SHE* ain't worth it,' says Bedford, lifting up both clenched fists out of the waistcoat pockets.

'What do you mean, Dick?' I ask.

'She's humbugging you,—she's humbugging me—she's humbugging everybody,' roars Dick. 'Look here, sir!' and out of one of the clenched fists he flings a paper down on the table.

'What is it?' I ask. 'It's her handwriting. I see the neat trim lines on the paper.'

'It's not to you; nor yet to me,' says Bedford.

'Then how dare you read it, sir?' I ask, all of a tremble.

'It's to him. It's to *Sawbones*,' hisses out Bedford. '*Sawbones* dropt it as he was getting into his gig; and I read it. I ain't going to make no bones about whether it's wrote to me or not. She tells him how you asked her to marry you. (Ha!)

That's how I came to know it. And do you know what she calls you, and what *he* calls you—that castor-hoil beast? And do you know what she says of you? That you hadn't pluck to stand by her to-day. There,—it's all down under her hand and seal. You may read it, or not, if you like. And if poppy or mandragora will medicine you to sleep afterwards, I just recommend you to take it. *I* shall go and get a drop out of the captain's bottle—I shall.'

And he leaves me, and the fatal paper on the table.

Now, suppose you had been in my case—would you, or would you not, have read the paper? Suppose there is some news—bad news—about the woman you love, will you, or will you not, hear it? Was Othello a rogue because he let Iago speak to him? There was the paper. It lay there glimmering under the light, with all the house quiet.

## CHAPTER VI.

CECILIA'S SUCCESSOR.



MONSIEUR ET HONORÉ

LECTEUR! I see, as perfectly as if you were sitting opposite to me, the scorn depicted on your noble countenance when you read my confession that I, Charles Batchelor, Esquire, did burglariously enter the premises of Edward Drencher, Esquire, M.R.C.S.I. (phew! the odious pestle-grinder, I never could bear him!), and break open, and read a certain letter, his property. I may have been wrong, but I am candid. I tell my misdeeds; some fellows hold their tongues. Besides, my good man, consider the temptation, and the horrid insight

into the paper which Bedford's report had already given me. Would *you* like to be told that the girl of your heart was playing fast and loose with it, had none of her own, or had given hers to another? I don't want to make a Mrs. Robin Gray of any woman, and merely because 'her mither presses her sair' to marry against her will. 'If Miss Prior,' thought I, 'prefers this lint-scraper to me, ought I to balk her? He is younger, and stronger, certainly than myself. Some people may consider him handsome. (By the way, what a remarkable thing it is about many women,



that, in affairs of the heart, they don't seem to care or understand whether a man is a gentleman or not.) It may be it is my superior fortune and social station which may induce Elizabeth to waver in her choice between me and my bleeding, bolusing, tooth-drawing rival. If so, and I am only taken from mercenary considerations, what a pretty chance of subsequent happiness do either of us stand! Take the vaccinator, girl, if thou preferrest him! I know what it is to be crossed in love already. It's hard, but I can bear it! I ought to know, I must know, I *will* know what is in that paper!' So saying, as I pace round and round the table where the letter lies flickering white under the midnight taper, I stretch out my hand—I seize the paper—I—well, I own it—there—yes—I took it, and read it.

Or rather, I may say, I read that part of IT which the bleeder and blisterer had flung down. It was but a fragment of a letter—a fragment—oh! how bitter to swallow! A lump of Epsom salt could not have been more disgusting. It appeared (from Bedford's statement) that Æsculapius, on getting into his gig, had allowed this scrap of paper to whisk out of his pocket—the rest he read, no doubt, under the eyes of the writer. Very likely, during the perusal he had taken and squeezed the false hand which wrote the lines. Very likely the first part of the *precious document* contained compliments to him—from the horrible context I judged so—compliments to that vendor of leeches and bandages, into whose heart I dare say I wished ten thousand lancets might be struck, as I perused the FALSE ONE'S wheedling address to him! So ran the document. How well every word of it was engraven on my anguished heart. If page *three*, which I suppose was about the bit of the letter which I got, was as it was—what must page *one* and *two* have been? The dreadful document began, then, thus:—

'—dear hair in the locket, which I shall *ever* wear for the sake of *him who gave it*'—(dear hair! indeed—disgusting carrots! She should have been ashamed to call it 'dear hair')—'for the sake of him who gave it, and whose *bad temper* I shall pardon, because I think, in spite of his faults, he is a *little fond* of his poor Lizzie! Ah, Edward! how *could* you go on so the last time about poor Mr. B. Can you imagine that I can ever have more than a filial regard for the kind old gentleman?' (*Il était question de moi, ma parole d'honneur. I was the kind old gentleman!*) 'I have known him since my childhood. He was intimate in our family in earlier and happier days; made our house his home; and, I must say, was most kind to all of us children. If he has vanities, you naughty boy, is he the only one of his sex who is

vain? Can you fancy that such an old creature (an *old muff*, as you call him, you wicked, satirical man!) could ever make an impression on my heart? No, sir!’ (Aha! so I was an old muff, was I?) ‘Though I don’t wish to make *you* vain too, or that other people should laugh at you, as you do at poor dear Mr. B., I think, sir, you need but look *in your glass* to see that you need not be afraid of such a rival as *that*. You fancy he is attentive to me? If you looked only a little angrily at him, he would fly back to London. To-day, when your *horrid little patient* did presume to offer to take my hand, when I boxed his little wicked ears and sent him *spinning* to the end of the room—poor Mr. Batch was so *frightened* that he did not *dare* to come into the room, and I saw him peeping behind a statue on the lawn, and he would not come in until the *servants arrived*. Poor man! We cannot all of us have courage like a *certain Edward*, who I know is as *bold as a lion*. Now, sir, you must not be quarrelling with that wretched little captain for being rude. I have shown him that I can very well *take care of myself*. I knew the *odious thing* the first moment I set eyes on him, though he had forgotten me. Years ago I met him, and I remember he was equally *rude and tips*—’

Here the letter was torn. Beyond ‘tips’ it did not go. But that was enough, wasn’t it? To this woman I had offered a gentle and manly, I may say a kind and tender heart—I had offered four hundred a year in funded property, besides my house in Devonshire Street, Bloomsbury—and she preferred *Edward*, forsooth, at the sign of the Gallipot: and may ten thousand pestles smash my brains!

You may fancy what a night I had after reading that scrap. I promise you I did not sleep much. I heard the hours toll as I kept vigil. I lay amidst shattered capitals, broken shafts of the tumbled palace which I had built in imagination—oh! how bright and stately. I sat amongst the ruins of my own happiness, surrounded by the murdered corpses of innocent-visions domestic joys. Tick-tock! Moment after moment I heard on the clock the clinking footsteps of wakeful grief. I fell into a doze towards morning, and dreamed that I was dancing with Glorvina, when I woke with a start, finding Bedford arrived with my shaving water, and opening the shutters. When he saw my haggard face he wagged his head.

‘You *have* read it, I see, sir,’ says he.

‘Yes, Dick,’ groaned I, out of bed, ‘I have swallowed it.’ And I laughed I may say a fiendish laugh. ‘And now I have taken it, not poppy nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy syrups in

his shop (hang him) will be able to medicine me to sleep for some time to come !’

‘She has no heart, sir. I don’t think she cares for t’other chap much,’ groans the gloomy butler. ‘She can’t, after having known us’—and my companion in grief, laying down my hot-water jug, retreats.

I did not cut any part of myself with my razor. I shaved quite calmly. I went to the family at breakfast. My impression is I was sarcastic and witty. I smiled most kindly at Miss Prior when she came in. Nobody could have seen from my outward behaviour that anything was wrong within. I was an apple. Could you inspect the worm at my core? No, no. Somebody, I think old Baker, complimented me on my good looks. I was a smiling lake. Could you see on my placid surface, amongst my sheeny water-lilies, that a corpse was lying under my cool depths? ‘A bit of devilled chicken!’ ‘No, thank you. By the way, Lovel, I think I must go to town to-day.’ ‘You’ll come back to dinner, of course?’ ‘Well—no.’ ‘Oh, stuff! You promised me to-day and to-morrow. Robinson, Brown, and Jones are coming to-morrow, and you must be here to meet them.’ Thus we prattle on. I answer, I smile, I say, ‘Yes, if you please, another cup,’ or, ‘Be so good as to hand the muffin,’ or what not. But I am dead. I feel as if I am under ground, and buried. Life, and tea, and clatter, and muffins are going on, of course; and daisies spring, and the sun shines on the grass whilst I am under it. Ah, dear me! it’s very cruel: it’s very, very lonely: it’s very odd. I don’t belong to the world any more. I have done with it. I am shelved away. But my spirit returns and flitters through the world, which it has no longer anything to do with: and my ghost, as it were, comes and smiles at my own tombstone. Here lies Charles Batchelor, the Unloved One. Oh! alone, alone, alone! Why, Fate! didst ordain that I should be companionless? Tell me where the Wandering Jew is, that I may go and sit with him. Is there any place at a lighthouse vacant? Who knows where is the Island of Juan Fernandez? Engage me a ship and take me there at once. Mr. R. Crusoe, I think. My dear Robinson, have the kindness to hand me over your goatskin cap, breeches, and umbrella. Go home, and leave me here. Would you know who is the solitariest man on earth? That man am I. Was that cutlet which I ate at breakfast anon, was that lamb which frisked on the mead last week (beyond yon wall where the unconscious cucumber lay basking which was to form his sauce)—I say, was that lamb made so tender, that I might eat him? And my heart, then? Poor heart! wert thou so softly constituted

only that women might stab thee? So I am a Muff, am I? And she will always wear a lock of his 'dear hair,' will she? Ha, ha! The men on the omnibus looked askance as they saw me laugh. They thought it was from Hanwell, not Putney, I was escaping. Escape? Who can escape? I went into London. I went to the Clubs. Jawkins, of course, was there; and my impression is that he talked as usual. I took another omnibus, and went back to Putney. 'I will go back and revisit my grave,' I thought. It is said that ghosts loiter about their former haunts a good deal when they are first dead; flit wistfully among their old friends and companions, and, I dare say, expect to hear a plenty of conversation and friendly tearful remark about themselves. But suppose they return, and find nobody talking of them at all? Or suppose, Hamlet (*Père*, and Royal Dane) comes back and finds Claudius and Gertrude very comfortable over a piece of cold meat, or what not? Is the late gentleman's present position as a ghost a very pleasant one? Crow, Cocks! Quick, Sun-dawn! Open, Trap-door! *Allons*: it's best to pop underground again. So I am a Muff, am I? What a curious thing that walk up the hill to the house was! What a different place Shrublands was yesterday to what it is to-day! Has the sun lost its light, and the flowers their bloom, and the joke its sparkle, and the dish its savour. Why, bless my soul! what is Lizzy herself—only an ordinary woman—freckled certainly—incorrigibly dull, and without a scintillation of humour: and you mean to say, Charles Batchelor, that your heart once beat about *that* woman? Under the intercepted letter of that cold assassin, my heart had fallen down dead, irretrievably dead. I remember, *à propos* of the occasion of my first death, that perpetrated by Glorvina—on my second visit to Dublin—with what a strange sensation I walked under some trees in the Phoenix Park beneath which it had been my custom to meet my False One Number I. There were the trees—there were the birds singing—there was the bench on which we used to sit—the same, but how different! The trees had a different foliage, exquisite amaranthine; the birds sang a song paradisaical; the bench was a bank of roses and fresh flowers, which young Lovel twined in fragrant chaplets around the statue of Glorvina. Roses and fresh flowers? Rheumatisms and flannel waistcoats, you silly old man. Foliage and song? O namby-pamby driveller! A statue?—a doll, thou twaddling old dullard! a doll with carmine cheeks, and a heart stuffed with bran—I say, on the night preceding that ride to and from Putney, I had undergone death—in that omnibus I had been carried over to t'other side of the Stygian shore. I returned but as a passionless ghost,

remembering my life-days, but not feeling any more. Love was dead, Elizabeth! Why, the doctor came, and partook freely of lunch, and I was not angry! Yesterday I call him names, and hated him, and was jealous of him. To-day I felt no rivalry; and no envy at his success; and no desire to supplant him. No—I swear—not the slightest wish to make Elizabeth mine if she would. I might have cared for her yesterday—yesterday I had a heart. Psha! my good sir or madam. You sit by me at dinner. Perhaps you are handsome, and use your eyes. Ogle away. Don't balk yourself, pray. But if you fancy I care a threepenny piece about you—or for your eyes—or for your bonny brown hair—or for your sentimental remarks, sidelong warbled—or for your praise to (not of) my face—or for your satire behind my back—ah me! how mistaken you are! *Peine perdue, ma chère dame!* The digestive organs are still in good working order—but the heart? *Caret.*

I was perfectly civil to Mr. Drencher, and, indeed, wonder to think how in my irritation I had allowed myself to apply (mentally) any sort of disagreeable phrases to a most excellent and deserving and good-looking young man, who is beloved by the poor, and has won the just confidence of an extensive circle of patients. I made no sort of remark to Miss Prior, except about the weather and the flowers in the garden. I was bland, easy, rather pleasant, not too high-spirited, you understand.—No; I vow you could not have seen a nerve wince, or the slightest alteration in my demeanour. I helped the two old dowagers; I listened to their twaddle; I gaily wiped up with my napkin three-quarters of a glass of sherry which Popham flung over my trousers. I would defy you to know that I had gone through the ticklish operation of an excision of the heart a few hours previously. Heart—pooh! I saw Miss Prior's lip quiver. Without a word between us, she knew perfectly well that all was over as regarded her late humble servant. *She* winced once or twice. While Drencher was busy with his plate, the grey eyes cast towards me interjectional looks of puzzled entreaty. *She*, I say, winced; and I give you my word I did not care a fig whether she was sorry, or pleased, or happy, or going to be hanged. And I can't give a better proof of my utter indifference about the matter, than the fact that I wrote two or three copies of verses descriptive of my despair. They appeared, you may perhaps remember, in one of the annuals of those days, and were generally attributed to one of the most sentimental of our young poets. I remember the reviews said they were 'replete with emotion,' 'full of passionate and earnest feeling,' and so forth. Feeling, indeed!—ha, ha! 'Passionate outbursts of a grief-stricken heart!'—Passionate



scrapings of a fiddlestick, my good friend. 'Lonely,' of course, rhymes with 'only,' and 'gushes' with 'blushes,' and 'despair' with 'hair,' and so on. Despair is perfectly compatible with a good dinner, I promise you. Hair is false: hearts are false. Grapes may be sour, but claret is good, my masters. Do you suppose I am going to cry my eyes out, because Chloe's are turned upon Strephon? If you find any whimpering in mine, may they never wink at a bee's-wing again.

When the doctor rose presently, saying he would go and see the gardener's child, who was ill, and casting longing looks at Miss Prior, I assure you I did not feel a tittle of jealousy, though Miss Bessy actually followed Mr. Drencher into the lawn, under the pretext of calling back Miss Cissy, who had run thither without her bonnet.

'Now, Lady Baker, which was right? you or I?' asks bonny Mrs. Bonnington, wagging her head towards the lawn where this couple of innocents were disporting.

'You thought there was an affair between Miss Prior and the medical gentleman,' I say, smiling. 'It was no secret, Mrs. Bonnington?'

'Yes, but there were others who were a little smitten in that quarter too,' says Lady Baker, and she in turn wags *her* old head towards me.

'You mean me?' I answer, as innocent as a new-born babe. 'I am a burnt child, Lady Baker; I have been at the fire, and am already thoroughly done, thank you. One of your charming sex jilted me some years ago; and once is quite enough, I am much obliged to you.'

This I said, not because it was true; in fact, it was the reverse of truth; but if I choose to lie about my own affairs, pray why not? And though a strictly truth-telling man generally, when I do lie, I promise you, I do it boldly and well.

'If, as I gather from Mrs. Bonnington, Mr. Drencher and Miss Prior like each other, I wish my old friend joy. I wish Mr. Drencher joy with all my heart. The match seems to me excellent. He is a deserving, a clever, and a handsome young fellow; and I am sure, ladies, you can bear witness to *her* goodness, after all you have known of her.'

'My dear Batchelor,' says Mrs. Bonnington, still smiling and winking, 'I don't believe one single word you say—not one single word!' And she looks infinitely pleased as she speaks.

'Oh!' cries Lady Baker, 'my good Mrs. Bonnington, you are always match-making—don't contradict me. You know you thought——'

'Oh, please don't,' cries Mrs. B.

'I will. She thought, Mr. Batchelor, she actually thought that our son, that my Cecilia's husband, was smitten by the governess. I should like to have seen him dare!' and her flashing eyes turn towards the late Mrs. Lovel's portrait, with its faded simper leering over the harp. 'The idea that any woman could succeed that angel indeed!'

'Indeed, I don't envy her,' I said.

'You don't mean, Batchelor, that my Frederick would not make any woman happy?' cries the Bonnington. 'He is only seven-and-thirty, very young for his age, and the most affectionate of creatures. I'm surprised, and it's most cruel, and most unkind of you, to say that you don't envy any woman that marries my boy!'

'My dear good Mrs. Bonnington, you quite misapprehend me,' I remark.

'Why, when his late wife was alive,' goes on Mrs. B., sobbing, 'you know with what admirable sweetness and gentleness he bore her—her—bad temper—excuse me, Lady Baker.'

'Oh, pray, abuse my departed angel!' cries the Baker; 'say that your son should marry and forget her—say that those darlings should be made to forget their mother. She was a woman of birth, and a woman of breeding, and a woman of family, and the Bakers came in with the Conqueror, Mrs. Bonnington——'

'I think I heard of one in the court of Pharaoh,' I interposed.

'And to say that a Baker is not worthy of a Lovel is *pretty* news indeed! Do you hear *that*, Clarence?'

'Hear what, ma'am?' says Clarence, who enters at this juncture. 'You're speakin' loud enough—though blesht if I hear two sh-shyllables.'

'You wretched boy, you have been smoking.'

'Shmoking—haven't I?' says Clarence, with a laugh: and 'I've been at the Five Bells, and I've been having a game of billiards with an old friend of mine,' and he lurches towards a decanter.

'Ah! don't drink any more, my child,' cries the mother.

'I'm as sober as a judge, I tell you. You leave so precious little in the bottle at dinner, that I must get it when I can, mustn't I, Batchelor, old boy? We had a row yesterday, hadn't we? No, it was sugar-baker. I'm not angry—you're not angry. Bear no malish. Here's your health, old boy.'

The unhappy gentleman drank his bumper of sherry, and tossing his hair off his head, said, 'Where's the governess—where's Bessy Bellenden? Who's that kickin' me under the table, I say?'

'Where is who?' asks his mother.

'Bessy Bellenden—the governess—that's her real name. Known her these ten years. Used to dansh at Prinsh's Theatre. Remember her in the corps-de-ballet. Ushed to go behind the shenes. Doosid pretty girl!' maunders out the tipsy youth; and as the unconscious subject of his mischievous talk enters the room, again he cries out, 'Come and sit by me, Bessy Bellenden, I say!'

The matrons rose with looks of horror in their faces. 'A ballet-dancer?' cries Mrs Bonnington. 'A ballet-dancer!' echoes Lady Baker. 'Young woman, is this true?'

'*The Bulbul and the Roshe*—hay?' laughs the captain. 'Don't you remember you and Fosbery in blue and shpangles? Always all right, though, Bellenden was. Fosbery washn't; but Bellenden was. Give you every credit for that, Bellenden. Boxsh my ears. Bear no malish—no—no—malish! Get some more sherry, you—whatsh your name—Bedford, butler—and I'll pay you the money I owe you;' and he laughs his wild laugh, utterly unconscious of the effect he is producing. Bedford stands staring at him as pale as death. Poor Miss Prior is as white as marble. Wrath, terror, and wonder are in the countenance of the dowagers. It is an awful scene!

'Mr. Batchelor knows that it was to help my family I did it,' says the poor governess.

'Yes, by George! and nobody can say a word against her,' bursts in Dick Bedford, with a sob; 'and she is as honest as any woman here!'

'Pray, who told you to put your oar in?' cries the tipsy captain.

'And you knew that this person was on the stage, and you introduced her into my son's family. Oh, Mr. Batchelor, Mr. Batchelor, I didn't think it of you! Don't speak to me, miss!' cries the flurried Bonnington.

'You brought this woman to the children of my adored Cecilia?' calls out the other dowager. 'Serpent, leave the room! Pack your trunks, viper! and quit the house this instant. Don't touch her, Cissy. Come to me, my blessing. Go away, you horrid wretch!'

'She ain't a horrid wretch; and when I was ill she was very good to us,' breaks in Pop, with a roar of tears: 'and you shan't go, Miss Prior—my dear, pretty Miss Prior. You shan't go!' and the child rushes up to the governess, and covers her neck with tears and kisses.

'Leave her, Popham, my darling blessing—leave that woman!' cries Lady Baker.

‘I won’t, you old beast!—and she sha-a-an’t go. And I wish you was dead—and, my dear, you shan’t go, and pa shan’t let you!’ shouts the boy.

‘O Popham, if Miss Prior has been naughty, Miss Prior must go!’ says Cecilia, tossing up her head.

‘Spoken like my daughter’s child!’ cries Lady Baker: and little Cissy, having flung her little stone, looks as if she had performed a very virtuous action.

‘God bless you, Master Pop,—you are a trump, you are!’ says Mr. Bedford.

‘Yes, that I am, Bedford; and she shan’t go, shall she?’ cries the boy.

But Bessy stooped down sadly, and kissed him. ‘Yes, I must, dear,’ she said.

‘Don’t touch him! Come away, sir! Come away from her this moment!’ shrieked the two mothers.

‘I nursed him through the scarlet fever, when his own mother would not come near him,’ says Elizabeth, gently.

‘I’m blest if she didn’t,’ sobs Bedford—‘and—bub—bub bless you, Master Pop!’

‘That child is wicked enough, and headstrong enough, and rude enough already!’ exclaims Lady Baker. ‘I desire, young woman, you will not pollute him farther!’

‘That’s a hard word to say to an honest woman, ma’am,’ says Bedford.

‘Pray, miss, are you engaged to the butler, too?’ hisses out the dowager.

‘There’s very little the matter with Maxwell’s child—only teeth. What on earth has happened? My dear Lizzy—my dear Miss Prior—what is it?’ cries the doctor, who enters from the garden at this juncture.

‘Nothing has happened, only this young woman has appeared in a new *character*,’ says Lady Baker. ‘My son has just informed us that Miss Prior danced upon the stage, Mr. Drencher; and if you think such a person is a fit companion for your mother and sisters, who attend a place of Christian worship, I believe—I wish you joy.’

‘Is this—is this—true?’ asks the doctor, with a look of bewilderment.

‘Yes, it is true,’ sighs the girl.

‘And you never told me, Elizabeth?’ groans the doctor.

‘She’s as honest as any woman here,’ calls out Bedford.

‘She gave all the money to her family.’

‘It wasn’t fair not to tell me. It wasn’t fair,’ sobs the

doctor. And he gives her a ghastly parting look, and turns his back.

'I say, you—Hi! What-d'-you-call-'em? Sawbones!' shrieks out Captain Clarence. 'Come back, I say. She's all right, I say. Upon my honour, now, she's all right.'

'Miss P. shouldn't have kept this from me. My mother and sisters are dissenters, and very strict. I couldn't ask a party into my family who has been—who has been—— I wish you good morning,' says the doctor, and stalks away.

'And now will you please to get your things ready and go, too,' continues Lady Baker. 'My dear Mrs. Bonnington, you think——'

'Certainly, certainly, she must go!' cries Mrs. Bonnington.

'Don't go till Lovel comes home, Miss. *These* ain't your mistresses. Lady Baker don't pay your salary. If you go, I go too. There!' calls out Bedford, and mumbles something in her ear about 'the end of the world.'

'You go too; and a good riddance, you insolent brute!' exclaims the dowager.

'O Captain Clarence! you have made a pretty morning's work,' I say.

'I don't know what the doose all the sherry—all the shinty's about,' says the captain, playing with the empty decanter. 'Gal's a very good gal—pretty gal. If she choosesh dansh shport her family, why the doosh shouldn't she dansh shport a family?'

'That is exactly what I recommend this person to do,' says Lady Baker, tossing up her head. 'And now I will thank you to leave the room. Do you hear!'

As poor Elizabeth obeyed this order, Bedford darted after her; and I know ere she had gone five steps he had offered her his savings and everything he had. She might have had mine yesterday. But she had deceived me. She had played fast and loose with me. She had misled me about this doctor. I could trust her no more. My love of yesterday was dead, I say. That vase was broke, which never could be mended. She knew all was over between us. She did not once look at me as she left the room.

The two dowagers—one of them, I think, a little alarmed at her victory—left the house, and for once went away in the same barouche. The young maniac who had been the cause of the mischief staggered away, I know not whither.

About four o'clock, poor little Pinhorn, the child's maid, came to me, well-nigh choking with tears, as she handed me a letter.



‘She’s goin’ away—and she saved both them children’s lives, she did. And she’ve wrote to you, sir. And Bedford’s a-goin’. And I’ll give warnin’, I will, too!’ And the weeping handmaiden retires, leaving me, perhaps somewhat frightened, with the letter in my hand.

‘Dear Sir,’ she said—‘I may write you a line of thanks and farewell. I shall go to my mother. I shall soon find another place. Poor Bedford, who has a generous heart, told me that he had given you a letter of mine to Mr. D. I saw this morning that you knew everything. I can only say now that for all your long kindnesses and friendship to my family I am always your sincere and grateful—E. P.’

Yes, that was all. I think she *was* grateful. But she had not been candid with me, nor with the poor surgeon. I had no anger: far from it: a great deal of regard and goodwill, nay admiration, for the intrepid girl who had played a long, hard part very cheerfully and bravely. But my foolish little flicker of love had blazed up and gone out in a day; I knew that she never could care for me. In that dismal, wakeful night, after reading the letter, I had thought her character and story over, and seen to what a life of artifice and dissimulation necessity had compelled her. I did not blame her. In such circumstances, with such a family, how could she be frank and open? Poor thing! poor thing! Do we know anybody? Ah! dear me, we are most of us very lonely in the world. You who have any who love you, cling to them, and thank God. I went into the hall towards evening: her poor trunks and packages were there, and the little nurserymaid weeping over them. The sight unmanned me; and I believe I cried myself. Poor Elizabeth! And with these small chests you recommence your life’s lonely voyage! I gave the girl a couple of sovereigns. She sobbed a God bless me! and burst out crying more desperately than ever. Thou hast a kind heart, little Pinhorn!

‘“Miss Prior—to be called for.” Whose trunks are these?’ says Lovel, coming from the City. The dowagers drove up at the same moment.

‘Didn’t you see us from the omnibus, Frederick?’ cries her ladyship, coaxingly. ‘We followed behind you all the way.’

‘We were in the barouche, my dear,’ remarks Mrs. Bonnington, rather nervously.

‘Whose trunks are these?—what’s the matter?—and what’s the girl crying for?’ asks Lovel.

‘Miss Prior is a-going away,’ sobs Pinhorn.

'Miss Prior going? Is this your doing, my Lady Baker?—or yours, mother?' the master of the house says, sternly.

'She is going, my love, because she cannot stay in this family,' says mamma.

'That woman is no fit companion for my angel's children, Frederick!' cries Lady B.

'That person has deceived us all, my love!' says mamma.

'Deceived?—how? Deceived whom?' continues Mr. Lovel, more and more hotly.

'Clarence, love! come down, dear! Tell Mr. Lovel everything. Come down and tell him this moment,' cries Lady Baker to her son, who at this moment appears on the corridor which was round the hall.

'What's the row now, pray?' And Captain Clarence descends, breaking his shins over poor Elizabeth's trunks, and calling down on them his usual maledictions.

'Tell Mr. Lovel where you saw that—that person, Clarence! Now, sir, listen to my Cecilia's brother!'

'Saw her—saw her, in blue and spangles, in *The Rose and the Bulbul*, at the Prince's Theatre—and a doosed nice-looking girl she was too!' says the captain.

'There, sir!'

'There, Frederick!' cry the matrons in a breath.

'And what then?' asks Lovel.

'Mercy! you ask, what then, Frederick? Do you know what a theatre is? Tell Frederick what a theatre is, Mr. Batchelor, and that my grandchildren must not be educated by——'

'My grandchildren—my Cecilia's children,' shrieks the other, 'must not be poll-luted by——'

'Silence!' I say. 'Have you a word against her—have you, pray, Baker?'

'No. 'Gad! I never said a word against her,' says the captain. 'No, hang me, you know—but——'

'But suppose I knew the fact the whole time?' asks Lovel, with rather a blush on his cheek. 'Suppose I knew that she danced to give the family bread? Suppose I knew that she toiled and laboured to support her parents and brothers and sisters? Suppose I know that out of her pittance she has continued to support them? Suppose I know that she watched my own children through fever and danger? For these reasons I must turn her out of doors, must I? No, by Heaven!—No——Elizabeth!—Miss Prior!—Come down!—Come here, I beg you.'

The governess, arrayed as for departure, at this moment appeared on the corridor running round the hall. As Lovel continued to



LOVEL'S MOTHERS.

speak very loud and resolute, she came down looking deadly pale.

Still much excited, the widower went up to her and took her hand. 'Dear Miss Prior!' he said — 'dear Elizabeth! you have been the best friend of me and mine. You tended my wife in illness, you took care of my children in fever and danger. You have been an admirable sister, daughter in your own family—and for this, and for these benefits conferred upon us, my relatives—my mother-in-law—would drive you out of my doors! It shall not be!—by heavens, it shall not be!'

You should have seen little Bedford sitting on the governess's box, shaking his fist, and crying 'Hurrah!' as his master spoke. By this time the loud voices and the altercation in the hall had brought a half-dozen of servants from their quarters into the hall. 'Go away, all of you!' shouts Lovel; and the domestic *posse* retires, Bedford being the last to retreat, and nodding approval at his master as he backs out of the room.

'You are very good, and kind, and generous, sir,' says the pale Elizabeth, putting a handkerchief to her eyes. 'But without the confidence of these ladies, I must not stay, Mr. Lovel. God bless you for your goodness to me. I must, if you please, return to my mother.'

The worthy gentleman looked fiercely round at the two elder women, and again seizing the governess's hand, said — 'Elizabeth! dear Elizabeth! I implore you not to go! If you love the children——'

'Oh, sir!' (A cambric veil covers Miss Prior's emotion, and the expression of her face, on this ejaculation.)

'If you love the children,' gasps out the widower, 'stay with them. If you have a regard for—for their father'—(Timanthes, where is thy pocket-handkerchief?)—'remain in this house, with such a title as none can question. Be the mistress of it!'

'His mistress—and before me!' screams Lady Baker. 'Mrs. Bonnington, this depravity is monstrous!'

'Be my wife! dear Elizabeth,' the widower continues. 'Continue to watch over the children, who shall be motherless no more.'

'Frederick! Frederick! haven't they got *us*?' shrieks one of the old ladies.

'Oh, my poor dear Lady Baker!' says Mrs. Bonnington.

'Oh, my poor dear Mrs. Bonnington!' says Lady Baker.

'Frederick, listen to your mother,' implores Mrs. Bonnington.

'To your mothers!' sobs Lady Baker.

And they both go down on their knees, and I heard a boohoo

of a guffaw behind the green-baized servants' door, where I have no doubt Mons. Bedford was posted.

'Ah! Batchelor, dear Batchelor, speak to him!' cries good Mrs. Bonny. 'We are praying this child, Batchelor—this child whom you used to know at College, and when he was a good, gentle, obedient boy. You have influence with my poor Frederick. Exert it for his heartbroken mother's sake; and you shall have my bubble-uble-essings, you shall.'

'My dear good lady,' I exclaim—not liking to see the kind soul in grief.

'Send for Doctor Straitwaist! Order him to pause in his madness,' cries Baker; 'or it is I, Cecilia's mother, the mother of that murdered angel, that shall go mad.'

'Angel! *Allons*,' I say. 'Since his widowhood, you have never given the poor fellow any peace. You have been for ever quarrelling with him. You took possession of his house, bullied his servants, spoiled his children—you did, Lady Baker!'

'Sir,' cries her ladyship, 'you are a low, presuming, vulgar man! Clarence, beat this rude man.'

'Nay,' I say, 'there must be no more quarrelling to-day. And I am sure Captain Baker will not molest me. Miss Prior, I am delighted that my old friend should have found a woman of good sense, good conduct, good temper—a woman who has had many trials, and borne them with very great patience—to take charge of him, and make him happy. I congratulate you both. Miss Prior has borne poverty so well that I am certain she will bear good fortune, for it *is* good fortune to become the wife of such a loyal, honest, kindly gentleman as Frederick Lovel.'

After such a speech as that, I think I may say, *liberavi animam*. Not one word of complaint, you see, not a hint about 'Edward,' not a single sarcasm, though I might have launched some terrific shots out of my quiver, and have made Lovel and his bride-elect writhe before me. But what is the need of spoiling sport? Shall I growl out of my sulky manger, because my comrade gets the meat? Eat it, happy dog! and be thankful. Would not that bone have choked me if I had tried it? Besides, I am accustomed to disappointment. Other fellows get the prizes which I try for. I am used to run second in the dreary race of love. Second? Psha! Third, fourth. *Que sais-je?* There was the Bombay captain in Bess's early days. There was Edward. Here is Frederick. Go to, Charles Batchelor; repine not at fortune; but be content to be Batchelor still. My sister has children. I will be an uncle, a parent to them. Isn't Edward of the scarlet whiskers distanced? Has not poor Dick Bedford



lost the race—poor Dick, who never had a chance, and is the best of us all? Besides, what fun it is to see Lady Baker deposed: think of Mrs. Prior coming in and reigning over her! The purple-faced old fury of a Baker, never will she bully, and rage, and trample more. She must pack up her traps, and be off. I know she must. I *can* congratulate Lovel sincerely, and that's the fact.

And here at this very moment, and as if to add to the comicality of the scene, who should appear but mother-in-law No. 2, Mrs. Prior, with her blue-coat boy and two or three of her children, who had been invited, or had invited themselves, to drink tea with Lovel's young ones, as their custom was whenever they could procure an invitation. Master Prior had a fine 'copy' under his arm, which he came to show to his patron Lovel. His mamma, entirely ignorant of what had happened, came fawning in with her old poke-bonnet, her old pocket, that vast depository of all sorts of stores, her old umbrella, and her usual dreary smirk. She made her obeisance to the matrons—she led up her blue-coat boy to Mr. Lovel, in whose office she hoped to find a clerk's place for her lad, on whose very coat and waistcoat she had designs whilst they were yet on his back: and she straightway began business with the dowagers—

'My lady, I hope your ladyship is quite well?' (a curtsey). 'Dear, kind Mrs. Bonnington! I came to pay my duty to you, mum. This is Louisa, my lady, the great girl for whom your ladyship so kindly promised the gown. And this is my little girl, Mrs. Bonnington, mum, please; and this is my big Blue. Go and speak to dear, kind Mr. Lovel, Gus, our dear good friend and protector—the son and son-in-law of these dear ladies. Look, sir, he has brought his copy to show you; and it's creditable to a boy of his age, isn't it, Mr. Batchelor? You can say, who know so well what writing is, and my kind services to you, sir—and Elizabeth, Lizzie my dear! where's your spectacles, you—you——'

Here she stopped, and looking alarmed at the group, at the boxes, at the blushing Lovel, at the pale countenance of the governess. 'Gracious goodness!' she said, 'what has happened? Tell me, Lizzy, what is it?'

'Is this collusion, pray?' says ruffled Mrs. Bonnington.

'Collusion, dear Mrs. Bonnington?'

'Or insolence?' bawls out my Lady Baker.

'Insolence, your ladyship? What—what is it? What are these boxes—Lizzy's boxes? Ah!' the mother broke out with a scream, 'you've not sent the poor girl away? Oh! my poor child—my poor children!'

'The Prince's Theatre has come out, Mrs. Prior,' here said I.

The mother clasps her meagre hands. 'It wasn't the darling's fault. It was to help her poor father in poverty. It was I who forced her to it. O ladies! ladies!—don't take the bread out of the mouth of these poor orphans!'—and genuine tears rained down her yellow cheeks.

'Enough of this,' says Mr. Lovel, haughtily. 'Mrs. Prior, your daughter is not going away. Elizabeth has promised to stay with me, and never to leave me—as governess no longer—but as——' and here he takes Miss Prior's hand.

'His wife! Is this—is this true, Lizzy?' gasped the mother.

'Yes, mamma,' meekly said Miss Elizabeth Prior.

At this the old woman flung down her umbrella, and uttering a fine scream, folds Elizabeth in her arms, and then runs up to Lovel: 'My son! my son!' says she (Lovel's face was not bad, I promise you, at this salutation and salute). 'Come here, children—come, Augustus, Fanny, Louisa, kiss your dear brother, children. And where are yours, Lizzy? Where are Pop and Cissy? Go and look for your little nephew and niece, dears: Pop and Cissy in the schoolroom, or in the garden, dears. They will be your nephew and niece now. Go and fetch them, I say.'

As the young Priors filed off, Mrs. Prior turned to the two other matrons, and spoke to them with much dignity: 'Most hot weather, your ladyship, I'm sure! Mr. Bonnington must find it very hot for preaching, Mrs. Bonnington. Lor! there's that little wretch beating my Johnny on the stairs. Have done, Pop, sir! How ever shall we make those children agree, Elizabeth?'

Quick, come to me, some skilful delineator of the British dowager and draw me the countenances of Lady Baker and Mrs. Bonnington!

'I call this a jolly game, don't you, Batchelor, old boy?' remarks the captain to me. 'Lady Baker, my dear, I guess your ladyship's nose is out of joint.'

'O Cecilia—Cecilia! don't you shudder in your grave?' cries Lady B. 'Call my people, Clarence—call Bulkeley—call my maid! Let me go, I say, from this house of horror!' and the old lady dashed into the drawing-room, where she uttered I know not what incoherent shrieks and appeals before that calm, glazed, simpering portrait of the departed Cecilia.

Now this is a truth, for which I call Lovel, his lady, Mrs. Bonnington, and Captain Clarence Baker as witnesses. Well, then, whilst Lady B. was adjuring the portrait, it is a fact that a string on Cecilia's harp—which has always been standing in the corner of the room under its shroud of Cordovan leather—a string, I say, of Cecilia's harp cracked, and went off with a loud *bong*,

which struck terror into all beholders. Lady Baker's agitation at the incident was awful ; I do not like to describe it—not having any wish to say anything tragic in this narrative—though that I can write tragedy, plays of mine (of which envious managers never could be got to see the merit) I think will prove, when they appear in my posthumous works.

Baker has always averred that at the moment when the harp-string broke, her heart broke too. But as she lived for many years, and may be alive now for what I know ; and as she borrowed money repeatedly from Lovel—he must be acquitted of the charge which she constantly brings against him of hastening her own death, and murdering his first wife Cecilia. 'The harp that once in Tara's Halls' used to make such a piteous feeble thrumming, has been carted off I know not whither ; and Cecilia's portrait, though it has been removed from the post of honour (where, you conceive, under present circumstances it would hardly be *à propos*), occupies a very reputable position in the pink room upstairs, which that poor young Clarence inhabited during my visit to Shrublands.

All the house has been altered. There's a fine organ in the hall, on which Elizabeth performs sacred music very finely. As for *my* old room, it would trouble you to smoke *there* under the present government. It is a library now, with many fine and authentic pictures of the Lovel family hanging up in it, the English branch of the house with the wolf crest, and *Gare à la louve* for the motto, and a grand posthumous portrait of a Portuguese officer (Gandish), Elizabeth's late father.

As for dear old Mrs. Bonnington, she, you may be sure, would be easily reconciled to any live mortal who was kind to her, and any plan which should make her son happy ; and Elizabeth has quite won her over. Mrs. Prior, on the deposition of the other dowagers, no doubt expected to reign at Shrublands, but in this object I am not very sorry to say was disappointed. Indeed, I was not a little amused, upon the very first day of her intended reign—that eventful one of which we have been describing the incidents—to see how calmly and gracefully Bessy pulled the throne from under her, on which the old lady was clambering.

Mrs. P. knew the house very well, and everything which it contained ; and when Lady Baker drove off with her son and her suite of domestics, Prior dashed through the vacant apartments, gleaning what had been left in the flurry of departure—a scarlet feather out of the dowager's room, a shirt-stud and a bottle of hair-oil, the captain's property. 'And now they are gone, and as

you can't be alone with him, my dear, I must be with you,' says she, coming down to her daughter.

'Of course, mamma, I must be with you,' says obedient Elizabeth.

'And there is the pink room, and the blue room, and the yellow room for the boys—and the chintz boudoir for me—I can put them all away, oh, so comfortably!'

'I can come and share Louisa's room, mamma,' says Bessy. 'It will not be proper for me to stay here at all—until afterwards, you know. Or I can go to my uncle at St. Boniface. Don't you think that will be best, eh, Frederick?'

'Whatever you wish, my dear Lizzy!' says Lovel.

'And I dare say there will be some little alterations made in the house. You talked, you know, of painting, Mr. Lovel; and the children can go to their grandmamma Bonnington. And on our return when the alterations are made we shall always be delighted to see *you*, Mr. Batchelor—our kindest old friend. Shall we not,—Frederick?'

'Always, always,' said Frederick.

'Come, children, come to your teas,' calls out Mrs. P. in a resolute voice.

'Dear Pop, I'm not going away—that is, only for a few days, dear,' says Bessy, kissing the boy; 'and you will love me, won't you?'

'All right,' says the boy. But Cissy said, when the same appeal was made to her: 'I shall love my dear mamma!' and makes her new mother-in-law a very polite curtsy.

'I think you had better put off those men you expect to dinner to-morrow, Fred?' I say to Lovel.

'I think I had, Batch,' says the gentleman.

'Or you can dine with them at the club, you know?' remarks Elizabeth.

'Yes, Bessy.'

'And when the children have had their tea I will go with mamma. My boxes are ready, you know,' says arch Bessy.

'And you will stay and dine with Mr. Lovel, won't you, Mr. Batchelor?' asks the lady.

It was the dreariest dinner I ever had in my life. No undertaker could be more gloomy than Bedford, as he served us. We tried to talk politics and literature. We drank too much, purposely. Nothing would do. 'Hang me, if I can stand this, Lovel,' I said, as we sat mum over our third bottle. 'I will go back and sleep at my chambers. I was not a little soft upon her myself, that's the truth. Here's her health, and happiness to both of you, with all my heart.' And we drained a

great bumper apiece, and I left him. He was very happy I should go.

Bedford stood at the gate, as the little pony-carriage came for me in the dusk. 'God bless you, sir,' says he. 'I can't stand it; I shall go too.' And he rubbed his hands over his eyes.

He married Mary Pinhorn, and they have emigrated to Melbourne; whence he sent me, three years ago, an affectionate letter, and a smart gold pin from the diggings.

A month afterwards, a cab might have been seen driving from the Temple to Hanover Square; and a month and a day after that drive, an advertisement might have been read in *The Post* and *Times*: 'Married on Thursday, 10th, at St. George's, Hanover Square, by the Reverend the Master of St. Boniface College, Oxbridge, uncle of the bride, Frederick Lovel, Esquire, of Shrublands, Roehampton, to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the late Captain Montagu Prior, K.S.F.'

We may hear of LOVEL MARRIED some other day, but here is an end of LOVEL THE WIDOWER. *Valete et plaudite*, you good people, who have witnessed the little comedy. Down with the curtain; cover up the boxes; pop out the gas-lights. Ho! cab. Take us home, and let us have some tea, and go to bed. Good-night, my little players. We have been merry together, and we part with soft hearts and somewhat rueful countenances, don't we?



SOME PASSAGES  
IN THE  
LIFE OF MAJOR GAHAGAN

GAHAGAN.

From the great mountain, he, Titicaca, in the Valley of H. the Mountain of the Dead, the...



## CHAPTER I.

‘TRUTH IS STRANGE, STRANGER THAN FICTION’

I THINK it but right that in making my appearance before the public I should at once acquaint them with my titles and name. My card, as I leave it at the houses of the nobility, my friends, is as follows :—

MAJOR GOLIAH O'GRADY GAHAGAN, H.E.I.C.S.,

*Commanding Battalion of*

*Irregular Horse,*

AHMEDNUGGAR.

Seeing, I say, this simple visiting-ticket, the world will avoid any of those awkward mistakes as to my person, which have been so frequent of late. There has been no end to the blunders regarding this humble title of mine, and the confusion thereby created. When I published my volume of poems, for instance, the *Morning Post* newspaper remarked ‘that the *Lyrics of the Heart*, by Miss Gahagan, may be ranked among the sweetest flowerets of the present spring season.’ The *Quarterly Review*, commenting upon my *Observations on the Pons Asinorum* (4to, London, 1836), called me ‘Doctor Gahagan,’ and so on. It was time to put an end to these mistakes, and I have taken the above simple remedy.

I was urged to it by a very exalted personage. Dining in August last at the Palace of the T-l-r-es at Paris, the lovely young Duch-ss of Orl-ns (who, though she does not speak English, understands it as well as I do) said to me, in the softest Teutonic, 'Lieber Herr Major, haben sie den Ahmednuggarischen-jäger-battalion gelassen?' 'Warum denn?' said I, quite astonished at her R-l H—ss's question. The P-cess then spoke of some trifle from my pen, which was simply signed Goliah Gahagan.

There was, unluckily, a dead silence as H.R.H. put this question.

'Comment donc?' said H.M. Lo-is Ph-l-ppe, looking gravely at Count Molé; 'le cher Major a quitté l'armée! Nicolas donc sera maître de l'Inde!' H.M—— and the Pr— M-n-ster pursued their conversation in a low tone, and left me, as may be imagined, in a dreadful state of confusion. I blushed, and stuttered, and murmured out a few incoherent words to explain—but it would not do—I could not recover my equanimity during the course of the dinner; and while endeavouring to help an English duke, my neighbour, to *poulet à l'Austerlitz*, fairly sent seven mushrooms and three large greasy *croûtes* over his whiskers and shirt-frill. Another laugh at my expense. 'Ah! M. le Major,' said the Q—— of the B-lg-ns, archly, 'vous n'aurez jamais votre brevet de Colonel.' Her M——y's joke will be better understood when I state that his grace is the brother of a minister.

I am not at liberty to violate the sanctity of private life by mentioning the names of the parties concerned in this little anecdote. I only wish to have it understood that I am a gentleman, and live at least in *decent society*. *Verbum sat*.

But to be serious. I am obliged always to write the name of Goliah in full, to distinguish me from my brother, Gregory Gahagan, who was also a major (in the King's service), and whom I killed in a duel, as the public most likely knows. Poor Greg! a very trivial dispute was the cause of our quarrel, which never would have originated but for the similarity of our names. The circumstance was this:—I had been lucky enough to render the Nawaub of Lucknow some trifling service (in the notorious affair of Choprasjee Muckjee), and his highness sent down a gold toothpick-case directed to Captain G. Gahagan, which I, of course, thought was for me: my brother madly claimed it; we fought, and the consequence was, that in about three minutes he received a slash in the right side (cut 6), which effectually did his business;—he was a good swordsman enough—I was THE BEST in the universe. The most ridiculous part of the affair is, that the toothpick-case was his after all—he had left it on the Nawaub's table at tiffin.

I can't conceive what madness prompted him to fight about such a paltry bauble; he had much better have yielded it at once, when he saw I was determined to have it. From this slight specimen of my adventures, the reader will perceive that my life has been one of no ordinary interest; and, in fact, I may say that I have led a more remarkable life than any man in the service—I have been at more pitched battles, led more forlorn hopes, had more success among the fair sex, drunk harder, read more, and been a handsomer man than any officer now serving Her Majesty.

When I first went to India in 1802, I was a raw cornet of seventeen, with blazing red hair, six feet seven in height, athletic at all kinds of exercises, owing money to my tailor and everybody else who would trust me, possessing an Irish brogue, and my full pay of £120 a year. I need not say that with all these advantages I did that which a number of clever fellows have done before me—I fell in love, and proposed to marry immediately.

But how to overcome the difficulty?—It is true that I loved Julia Jowler—loved her to madness; but her father intended her for a Member of Council at least, and not for a beggarly Irish ensign. It was, however, my fate to make the passage to India (on board of the *Samuel Snob* East Indiaman, Captain Duffy) with this lovely creature, and my misfortune instantaneously to fall in love with her. We were not out of the channel before I adored her, worshipped the deck which she trod upon, kissed a thousand times the cuddy-chair on which she used to sit. The same madness fell on every man in the ship. The two mates fought about her at the Cape—the surgeon, a sober, pious Scotchman, from disappointed affection, took so dreadfully to drinking as to threaten spontaneous combustion—and old Colonel Lilywhite, carrying his wife and seven daughters to Bengal, swore that he would have a divorce from Mrs. L., and made an attempt at suicide—the captain himself told me, with tears in his eyes, that he hated his hitherto adored Mrs. Duffy, although he had had nineteen children by her.

We used to call her the witch—there was magic in her beauty and in her voice. I was spell-bound when I looked at her, and stark staring mad when she looked at me! Oh, lustrous black eyes!—Oh, glossy night-black ringlets!—Oh, lips!—Oh, dainty frocks of white muslin!—Oh, tiny kid slippers!—though old and gouty, Gahagan sees you still! I recollect off Ascension, she looked at me in her particular way one day at dinner, just as I happened to be blowing on a piece of scalding hot green fat. I was stupefied at once—I thrust the entire morsel (about half a pound) into my mouth. I made no attempt to swallow or to masticate it, but left it there for many minutes burning, burning!



I had no skin to my palate for seven weeks after, and lived on rice-water during the rest of the voyage. The anecdote is trivial, but it shows the power of Julia Jowler over me.

The writers of marine novels have so exhausted the subject of storms, shipwrecks, mutinies, engagements, sea-sickness, and so forth, that (although I have experienced each of these in many varieties) I think it quite unnecessary to recount such trifling adventures; suffice it to say, that during our five months' *trajét*, my mad passion for Julia daily increased; so did the captain's and the surgeon's; so did Colonel Lilywhite's; so did the doctor's, the mate's—that of most part of the passengers, and a considerable number of the crew. For myself, I swore—ensign as I was—I would win her for my wife; I vowed that I would make her glorious with my sword—that as soon as I had made a favourable impression on my commanding officer (which I did not doubt to create), I would lay open to him the state of my affections, and demand his daughter's hand. With such sentimental outpourings did our voyage continue and conclude.

We landed at the Sunderbunds on a grilling hot day in December 1802, and then for the moment Julia and I separated. She was carried off to her papa's arms in a palankeen, surrounded by at least forty hookahbadars; whilst the poor cornet, attended but by two dandies and a solitary beastly (by which unnatural name these blackamoors are called), made his way humbly to join the regiment at headquarters.

The —th Regiment of Bengal Cavalry, then under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Julius Jowler, C.B., was known throughout Asia and Europe by the proud title of the Bundelcund Invincibles—so great was its character for bravery, so remarkable were its services in that delightful district of India. Major Sir George Gutch was next in command, and Tom Thrupp, as kind a fellow as ever ran a Mahratta through the body, was second major. We were on the eve of that remarkable war which was speedily to spread throughout the whole of India, to call forth the valour of a Wellesley, and the indomitable gallantry of a Gahagan; which was illustrated by our victories at Ahmednuggar (where I was the first over the barricade at the storming of the Pettah); at Argaum, where I slew with my own sword twenty-three matchlock-men, and cut a dromedary in two; and by that terrible day of Assaye, where Wellesley would have been beaten but for me—me alone; I headed nineteen charges of cavalry, took (aided by only four men of my own troop) seventeen field-pieces, killing the scoundrelly French artillerymen; on that day I had eleven elephants shot under me, and carried away Scindia's nose-ring with a pistol-ball.

Wellesley is a Duke and a Marshal, I but a simple Major of Irregulars. Such is fortune and war! But my feelings carry me away from my narrative, which had better proceed with more order.

On arriving, I say, at our barracks at Dum Dum, I for the first time put on the beautiful uniform of the Invincibles; a light blue swallow-tailed jacket, with silver lace and wings, ornamented with about 3000 sugar-loaf buttons, rhubarb-coloured leather inexpressibles (tights), and red morocco boots with silver spurs and tassels, set off to admiration the handsome persons of the officers of our corps. We wore powder in those days, and a regulation pigtail of seventeen inches, a brass helmet surrounded by leopard-skin, with a bear-skin top, and a horse-tail feather, gave the head a fierce and chivalrous appearance, which is far more easily imagined than described.

Attired in this magnificent costume, I first presented myself before Colonel Jowler. He was habited in a manner precisely similar, but not being more than five feet in height, and weighing at least fifteen stone, the dress he wore did not become him quite so much as slimmer and taller men. Flanked by his tall majors, Thrupp and Gutch, he looked like a stumpy skittle-ball between two attenuated skittles. The plump little Colonel received me with vast cordiality, and I speedily became a prime favourite with himself and the other officers of the corps. Jowler was the most hospitable of men, and, gratifying my appetite and my love together, I continually partook of his dinners, and feasted on the sweet presence of Julia.

I can see now, what I would not and could not perceive in those early days, that this Miss Jowler, on whom I had lavished my first and warmest love, whom I had endowed with all perfection and purity, was no better than a little impudent flirt, who played with my feelings, because during the monotony of a sea voyage she had no other toy to play with; and who deserted others for me, and me for others, just as her whim or her interest might guide her. She had not been three weeks at headquarters when half the regiment was in love with her. Each and all of the candidates had some favour to boast of, or some encouraging hopes on which to build. It was the scene of the *Samuel Snob* over again, only heightened in interest by a number of duels. The following list will give the reader a notion of some of them:—

1. Cornet Gahagan . . Ensign Hicks, of the Sappers and Miners. Hicks received a ball in his jaw, and was half choked by a quantity of carroty whisker forced down his throat with the ball.

2. Captain Macgillicuddy, Cornet Gahagan. — I was run  
B.N.I. through the body, but the sword  
passed between the ribs, and in-  
jured me very slightly.
3. Captain Macgillicuddy, Mr. Mulligatawney, B.C.S., Deputy-  
B.N.I. Assistant, Vice Sub-Controller of  
the Boggleywollah Indigo grounds,  
Ramgolly branch.

Macgillicuddy should have stuck to sword's play, and he might have come off in his second duel as well as in his first; as it was, the civilian placed a ball and a part of Mac's gold repeater in his stomach. A remarkable circumstance attended this shot, an account of which I sent home to the Philosophical Transactions: the surgeon had extracted the ball, and was going off, thinking that all was well, when the gold repeater struck thirteen in poor Macgillicuddy's abdomen. I suppose that the works must have been disarranged in some way by the bullet, for the repeater was one of Barraud's, never known to fail before, and the circumstance occurred at *seven o'clock*.<sup>1</sup>

I could continue, almost *ad infinitum*, on account of the wars which this Helen occasioned, but the above three specimens will, I should think, satisfy the peaceful reader. I delight not in scenes of blood, Heaven knows, but I was compelled in the course of a few weeks, and for the sake of this one woman, to fight nine duels myself, and I know that four times as many more took place concerning her.

I forgot to say that Jowler's wife was a half-caste woman, who had been born and bred entirely in India, and whom the Colonel had married from the house of her mother, a native. There were some singular rumours abroad regarding this latter lady's history—it was reported that she was the daughter of a native Rajah, and had been carried off by a poor English subaltern in Lord Clive's time. The young man was killed very soon after, and left his child with its mother. The black Prince forgave his daughter and bequeathed to her a handsome sum of money. I suppose it was on this account that Jowler married Mrs. J., a creature who had not, I do believe, a Christian name, or a single Christian quality—she was a hideous, bloated, yellow creature, with a beard, black

<sup>1</sup> So admirable are the performances of these watches, which will stand in any climate, that I repeatedly heard poor Macgillicuddy relate the following fact. The hours, as it is known, count in Italy from one to twenty-four: *the day Mac landed at Naples his repeater rung the Italian hours, from one to twenty-four*: as soon as he crossed the Alps it only sounded as usual.

teeth, and red eyes: she was fat, lying, ugly, and stingy—she hated and was hated by all the world, and by her jolly husband as devoutly as by any other. She did not pass a month in the year with him, but spent most of her time with her native friends. I wonder how she could have given birth to so lovely a creature as her daughter. This woman was of course with the Colonel when Julia arrived, and the spice of the devil in her daughter's composition was most carefully nourished and fed by her. If Julia had been a flirt before, she was a downright jilt now; she set the whole cantonment by the ears; she made wives jealous and husbands miserable; she caused all those duels of which I have discoursed already, and yet such was the fascination of THE WITCH that I still thought her an angel. I made court to the nasty mother in order to be near the daughter; and I listened untiringly to Jowler's interminable dull stories, because I was occupied all the time in watching the graceful movements of Miss Julia.

But the trumpet of war was soon ringing in our ears; and on the battle-field Gahagan is a man! The Bundelcund Invincibles received orders to march, and Jowler, Hector-like, donned his helmet, and prepared to part from his Andromache. And now arose his perplexity: what must be done with his daughter, his Julia? He knew his wife's peculiarities of living, and did not much care to trust his daughter to her keeping; but in vain he tried to find her an asylum among the respectable ladies of his regiment. Lady Gutch offered to receive her, but would have nothing to do with Mrs. Jowler; the surgeon's wife, Mrs. Sawbone, would have neither mother nor daughter; there was no help for it, Julia and her mother must have a house together, and Jowler knew that his wife would fill it with her odious blackamoor friends.

I could not, however, go forth satisfied to the campaign until I had learned from Julia my fate. I watched twenty opportunities to see her alone, and wandered about the Colonel's bungalow as an informer does about a public-house, marking the incomings and outgoings of the family, and longing to seize the moment when Miss Jowler, unbiassed by her mother or her papa, might listen, perhaps, to my eloquence, and melt at the tale of my love.

But it would not do—old Jowler seemed to have taken all of a sudden to such a fit of domesticity, that there was no finding him out of doors, and his rhubarb-coloured wife (I believed that her skin gave the first idea of our regimental breeches), who before had been gadding ceaselessly abroad, and poking her broad nose into every *ménage* in the cantonment, stopped faithfully at home with her spouse. My only chance was to beard the old couple in their den, and ask them at once for their *cub*.

So I called one day at tiffin:—old Jowler was always happy to have my company at this meal; it amused him, he said, to see me drink Hodgson's pale ale (I drank two hundred and thirty-four dozen the first year I was in Bengal)—and it was no small piece of fun, certainly, to see old Mrs. Jowler attack the currie-bhaut;—she was exactly the colour of it, as I have had already the honour to remark, and she swallowed the mixture with a gusto which was never equalled, except by my poor friend Dando, *à propos d'huîtres*. She consumed the first three platesful, with a fork and spoon, like a Christian; but as she warmed to her work, the old hag would throw away her silver implements, and, dragging the dishes towards her, go to work with her hands, flip the rice into her mouth with her fingers, and stow away a quantity of eatables sufficient for a sepoy company. But why do I diverge from the main point of my story?

Julia, then, Jowler, and Mrs. J., were at luncheon: the dear girl was in the act to *såbler* a glass of Hodgson as I entered. 'How do you do, Mr. Gagin?' said the old hag, leeringly; 'eat a bit o' currie-bhaut'—and she thrust the dish towards me, securing a heap as it passed. 'What, Gagy, my boy, how do, how do?' said the fat colonel; 'what, run through the body?—got well again—have some Hodgson—run through your body too!'—and at this, I may say, coarse joke (alluding to the fact that in these hot climates the ale oozes out as it were from the pores of the skin) old Jowler laughed: a host of swarthy chobdars, kitmatgars, sices, consomers, and bobbychies laughed too, as they provided me, unasked, with the grateful fluid. Swallowing six tumblers of it, I paused nervously for a moment, and then said—

'Bobbachy, consomah, ballybaloo hoga.'

The black ruffians took the hint, and retired.

'Colonel and Mrs. Jowler,' said I, solemnly, 'we are alone; and you, Miss Jowler, you are alone too; that is—I mean—I take this opportunity to—(another glass of ale, if you please)—to express, once for all, before departing on a dangerous campaign'—(Julia turned pale)—'before entering, I say, upon a war which may stretch in the dust my high-raised hopes and me, to express my hopes while life still remains to me, and to declare, in the face of heaven, earth, and Colonel Jowler, that I love you, Julia!' The Colonel, astonished, let fall a steel fork, which stuck quivering for some minutes in the calf of my leg; but I heeded not the paltry interruption. 'Yes, by yon bright heaven,' continued I, 'I love you, Julia! I respect my commander, I esteem your excellent and beauteous mother; tell me, before I leave you, if I may hope for a return of my affection. Say that you love me,



and I will do such deeds in this coming war as shall make you proud of the name of your Gahagan.'

The old woman, as I delivered these touching words, stared, snapped, and ground her teeth like an enraged monkey. Julia was now red, now white; the colonel stretched forward, took the fork out of the calf of my leg, wiped it, and then seized a bundle of letters, which I had remarked by his side.

'A cornet!' said he, in a voice choking with emotion; 'a pitiful, beggarly, Irish cornet aspire to the hand of Julia Jowler! Gag—Gahagan, are you mad, or laughing at us? Look at these letters, young man, at these letters, I say—one hundred and twenty-four epistles from every part of India (not including one from the Governor-General and six from his brother, Colonel Wellesley)—one hundred and twenty-four proposals for the hand of Miss Jowler! Cornet Gahagan,' he continued, 'I wish to think well of you: you are the bravest, the most modest, and, perhaps, the handsomest man in our corps, but you have not got a single rupee. You ask me for Julia, and you do not possess even an anna!'—(Here the old rogue grinned, as if he had made a capital pun.)—'No, no,' said he, waxing good-natured; 'Gagy, my boy, it is nonsense! Julia, love, retire with your mamma; this silly young gentleman will remain and smoke a pipe with me.'

I took one; it was the bitterest chillum I ever smoked in my life.

I am not going to give here an account of my military services; they will appear in my great national autobiography, in forty volumes, which I am now preparing for the press. I was with my regiment in all Wellesley's brilliant campaigns; then, taking dawk, I travelled across the country north-eastward, and had the honour of fighting by the side of Lord Lake, at Laswaree, Deeg, Furruckabad, Futtighur, and Bhurtpore; but I will not boast of my actions—the military man knows them, MY SOVEREIGN appreciates them. If asked who was the bravest man of the Indian army, there is not an officer belonging to it who would not cry at once, GAHAGAN. The fact is, I was desperate; I cared not for life, deprived of Julia Jowler.

With Julia's stony looks ever before my eyes, her father's stern refusal in my ears, I did not care, at the close of the campaign, again to seek her company or to press my suit. We were eighteen months on service, marching and counter-marching, and fighting almost every other day; to the world I did not seem altered; but the world only saw the face, and not the seared and blighted heart within me. My valour, always desperate, now reached to

a pitch of cruelty ; I tortured my grooms and grass-cutters for the most trifling offence or error, —I never in action spared a man,— I sheared off three hundred and nine heads in the course of that single campaign.

Some influence, equally melancholy, seemed to have fallen upon poor old Jowler. About six months after we had left Dum Dum, he received a parcel of letters from Benares (whither his wife had retired with her daughter), and so deeply did they seem to weigh upon his spirits, that he ordered eleven men of his regiment to be flogged within two days ; but it was against the blacks that he chiefly turned his wrath : our fellows, in the heat and hurry of the campaign, were in the habit of dealing rather roughly with their prisoners, to extract treasure from them. They used to pull their nails out by the root, to boil them in kedgerree pots, to flog them and dress their wounds with cayenne pepper, and so on. Jowler, when he heard of these proceedings, which before had always justly exasperated him (he was a humane and kind little man), used now to smile fiercely, and say, ‘D—— the black scoundrels ! Serve them right, serve them right !’

One day, about a couple of miles in advance of the column, I had been on a foraging-party with a few dragoons, and was returning peaceably to the camp, when of a sudden, a troop of Mahrattas burst on us from a neighbouring mango-tope, in which they had been hidden : in an instant, three of my men’s saddles were empty, and I was left with but seven more to make head against at least thirty of these vagabond black horsemen. I never saw, in my life, a nobler figure than the leader of the troop— mounted on a splendid black Arab ; he was as tall, very nearly, as myself ; he wore a steel cap, and a shirt of mail, and carried a beautiful French carbine, which had already done execution upon two of my men. I saw that our only chance of safety lay in the destruction of this man. I shouted to him in a voice of thunder (in the Hindostanee tongue of course), ‘Stop, dog, if you dare, and encounter a man !’

In reply his lance came whirling in the air over my head, and mortally transfixing poor Foggarty, of ours, who was behind me. Grinding my teeth, and swearing horribly, I drew that scimitar which never yet failed in its blow,<sup>1</sup> and rushed at the Indian. He came down at full gallop, his own sword making ten thousand gleaming circles in the air, shrieking his cry of battle.

The contest did not last an instant. With my first blow I cut off his sword-arm at the wrist ; my second I levelled at his

<sup>1</sup> In my affair with Macgillicuddy, I was fool enough to go out with small swords :—miserable weapons, only fit for tailors.—G. O’G. G.

head. I said that he wore a steel cap, with a gilt iron spike of six inches, and a hood of chain mail. I rose in my stirrups, and delivered '*St. George*;' my sword caught the spike exactly on the point, split it sheer in two, cut crashing through the steel cap and hood, and was only stopped by a ruby which he wore in his back-plate. His head, cut clean in two between the eyebrows and nostrils, even between the two front teeth, fell, one side on each shoulder, and he galloped on till his horse was stopped by my men, who were not a little amused at the feat.

As I had expected, the remaining ruffians fled on seeing their leader's fate. I took home his helmet by way of curiosity, and we made a single prisoner, who was instantly carried before old Jowler.

We asked the prisoner the name of the leader of the troop; he said it was Chowder Loll.

'CHOWDER LOLL!' shrieked Colonel Jowler. 'Oh, Fate! thy hand is here!' He rushed wildly into his tent—the next day applied for leave of absence—Gutch took the command of the regiment, and I saw him no more for some time.

As I had distinguished myself not a little during the war, General Lake sent me up with despatches to Calcutta, where Lord Wellesley received me with the greatest distinction. Fancy my surprise, on going to a ball at Government House, to meet my old friend Jowler; my trembling, blushing, thrilling delight, when I saw Julia by his side!

Jowler seemed to blush too when he beheld me. I thought of my former passages with his daughter. 'Gagy, my boy,' said he, shaking hands, 'glad to see you, old friend, Julia—come to tiffin—Hodgson's pale—brave fellow Gagy.' Julia did not speak, but she turned ashy pale and fixed upon me with her awful eyes! I fainted almost, and uttered some incoherent words. Julia took my hand, gazed at me still, and said, 'Come!' Need I say I went?

I will not go over the pale ale and currie-bhaut again, but this I know, that in half-an-hour I was as much in love as I ever had been; and that in three weeks—I, yes I—was the accepted lover of Julia! I did not pause to ask, where were the one hundred and twenty-four offers? why I, refused before, should be accepted now? I only felt that I loved her, and was happy!

One night, one memorable night, I could not sleep, and, with a lover's pardonable passion, wandered solitary through the city of palaces until I came to the house which contained my Julia. I peeped into the compound—all was still;—I looked into the

verandah—all was dark, except a light—yes, one light—and it was in Julia's chamber! My heart throbbed almost to stifling. I would—I *would* advance, if but to gaze upon her for a moment, and to bless her as she slept. I *did* look, I *did* advance; and, O Heaven! I saw a lamp burning, Mrs. Jow. in a night-dress, with a very dark baby in her arms, and Julia, looking tenderly at an Ayah, who was nursing another.

'Oh, mamma,' said Julia, 'what would that fool Gahagan say, if he knew all?'

'*He does know all!*' shouted I, springing forward, and tearing down the tatties from the window. Mrs. Jow. ran shrieking out of the room, Julia fainted, the cursed black children squalled, and their d—d nurse fell on her knees, gabbling some infernal jargon of Hindostanee. Old Jowler at this juncture entered with a candle and a drawn sword.

'Liar! scoundrel! deceiver!' shouted I. 'Turn, ruffian, and defend yourself!' But old Jowler, when he saw me, only whistled, looked at his lifeless daughter, and slowly left the room.

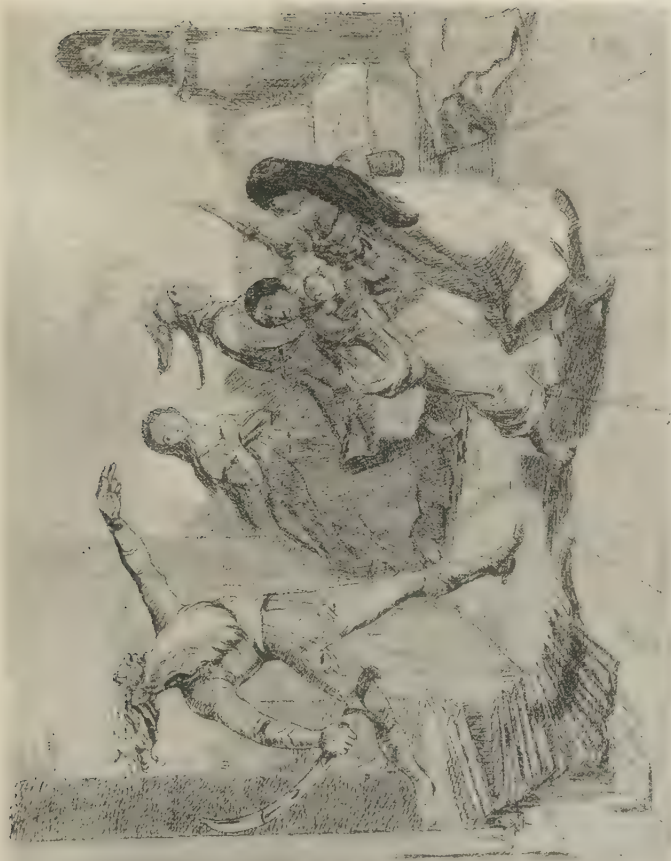
Why continue the tale? I need not now account for Jowler's gloom on receiving his letters from Benares—for his exclamation upon the death of the Indian chief—for his desire to marry his daughter: the woman I was wooing was no longer Miss Julia Jowler, she was Mrs. CHOWDER LOLL.

## CHAPTER II.

### ALLYGHUR AND LASWAREE.

I SIT down to write gravely and sadly, for (since the appearance of some of my adventures in a monthly magazine) unprincipled men have endeavoured to rob me of the only good I possess, to question the statements that I make, and themselves, without a spark of honour or good feeling, to steal from me that which is my sole wealth—my character as a teller of THE TRUTH.

The reader will understand that it is to the illiberal strictures of a profligate press I now allude; among the London journalists, none (luckily for themselves) have dared to question the veracity of my statements; they know me, and they know that I am *in London*. If I can use the pen, I can also wield a more manly and terrible weapon, and would answer their contradictions with my sword! No gold or gems adorn the hilt of that war-worn



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THE MAJOR DISCOVERING THE INFIDELITY OF MRS. CHOWDER LOLL.



scimitar, but there is blood upon the blade—the blood of the enemies of my country, and the maligners of my honest fame. There are others, however—the disgrace of a disgraceful trade—who, borrowing from distance a despicable courage, have ventured to assail me. The infamous editors of the *Kelso Champion*, the *Bungay Beacon*, the *Tipperary Argus*, and the *Stoke Pogis Sentinel*, and other dastardly organs of the provincial press, have, although differing in politics, agreed upon this one point, and with a scoundrelly unanimity, vented a flood of abuse upon the revelations made by me.

They say that I have assailed private characters, and wilfully perverted history to blacken the reputation of public men. I ask, Was any one of these men in Bengal in the year 1803? Was any single conductor of any one of these paltry prints ever in Bundelcund or the Rohilla country? Does this *exquisite* Tipperary scribe know the difference between Hurrygurrybang and Burrumtollah? Not he! and because, forsooth, in those strange and distant lands strange circumstances have taken place, it is insinuated that the relater is a liar, nay, that the very places themselves have no existence but in my imagination. Fools!—but I will not waste my anger upon them, and proceed to recount some other portions of my personal history.

It is, I presume, a fact which even *these* scribbling assassins will not venture to deny, that before the commencement of the campaign against Scindiah, the English general formed a camp at Kanouge on the Jumna, where he exercised that brilliant little army which was speedily to perform such wonders in the Dooab. It will be as well to give a slight account of the causes of a war which was speedily to rage through some of the fairest portions of the Indian continent.

Shah Allum, the son of Shah Lollum, the descendant by the female line of Nadir Shah (that celebrated Toorkomaun adventurer, who had well-nigh hurled Bajazet and Selim the Second from the throne of Bagdad); Shah Allum, I say, although nominally the Emperor of Delhi, was, in reality, the slave of the various warlike chieftains who lorded it by turns over the country and the sovereign, until conquered and slain by some more successful rebel. Chowder Loll Masolgee, Zubberdust Khan, Dowsunt Row Scindiah, and the celebrated Bobbachy Jung Bahawder, had held for a time complete mastery in Delhi. The second of these, a ruthless Afghaun soldier, had abruptly entered the capital, nor was he ejected from it until he had seized upon the principal jewels, and likewise put out the eyes of the last of the unfortunate family of Afrasiâb. Scindiah came to the rescue of the sightless Shah Allum, and though he

destroyed his oppressor, only increased his slavery, holding him in as painful a bondage as he had suffered under the tyrannous Afghaun.

As long as these heroes were battling among themselves, or as long rather as it appeared that they had any strength to fight the battle, the British Government, ever anxious to see its enemies by the ears, by no means interfered in the contest. But the French Revolution broke out, and a host of starving sans-culottes appeared among the various Indian States, seeking for military service, and inflaming the minds of the various native princes against the British East India Company. A number of these entered into Scindiah's ranks—one of them, Perron, was commander of his army; and though that chief was as yet quite engaged in his hereditary quarrel with Jeswunt Row Holkar, and never thought of an invasion of the British territory, the Company all of a sudden discovered that Shah Allum, his sovereign, was shamefully ill-used, and determined to re-establish the ancient splendour of his throne.

Of course it was sheer benevolence for poor Shah Allum that prompted our governors to take these kindly measures in his favour. I don't know how it happened that, at the end of the war, the poor Shah was not a whit better off than at the beginning; and that though Holkar was beaten, and Scindiah annihilated, Shah Allum was much such a puppet as before. Somehow, in the hurry and confusion of this struggle, the oyster remained with the British Government, who had so kindly offered to dress it for the emperor, while his majesty was obliged to be contented with the shell.

The force encamped at Kanouge bore the title of the Grand Army of the Ganges and the Junna; it consisted of eleven regiments of cavalry and twelve battalions of infantry, and was commanded by General Lake in person.

Well, on the 1st of September we stormed Perron's camp at Allyghur; on the 4th we took that fortress by assault; and as my name was mentioned in general orders, I may as well quote the commander-in-chief's words regarding me—they will spare me the trouble of composing my own eulogium:—

'The commander-in-chief is proud thus publicly to declare his high sense of the gallantry of Lieutenant Gahagan, of the ——— Cavalry. In the storming of the fortress, although unprovided with a single ladder, and accompanied but by a few brave men, Lieutenant Gahagan succeeded in escalading the inner and fourteenth wall of the place. Fourteen ditches, lined with sword-

blades and poisoned chevaux-de-frise, fourteen walls bristling with innumerable artillery, and as smooth as looking-glasses, were in turns triumphantly passed by that enterprising officer. His course was to be traced by the heaps of slaughtered enemies lying thick upon the platforms; and, alas! by the corpses of most of the gallant men who followed him!—when at length he effected his lodgment, and the dastardly enemy, who dared not to confront him with arms, let loose upon him the tigers and lions of Scindiah's menagerie:—this meritorious officer destroyed, with his own hand, four of the largest and most ferocious animals, and the rest, awed by the indomitable majesty of BRITISH VALOUR, shrunk back to their dens. Thomas Higgory, a private, and Runty Goss, havildar, were the only two who remained out of the nine hundred who followed Lieutenant Gahagan. Honour to them! Honour and tears for the brave men who perished on that awful day!’

I have copied this, word for word, from the *Bengal Hurkaru* of 24th September 1803; and anybody who has the slightest doubt as to the statement, may refer to the paper itself.

And here I must pause to give thanks to Fortune, which so marvellously preserved me, Sergeant-Major Higgory, and Runty Goss. Were I to say that any valour of ours had carried us unhurt through this tremendous combat, the reader would laugh me to scorn. No: though my narrative is extraordinary, it is nevertheless authentic; and never, never would I sacrifice truth for the mere sake of effect. The fact is this:—the citadel of Allyghur is situated upon a rock, about a thousand feet above the level of the sea, and is surrounded by fourteen walls, as his excellency was good enough to remark in his despatch. A man who would mount these without scaling-ladders, is an ass; he who would *say* he mounted them without such assistance, is a liar and a knave. We *had* scaling-ladders at the commencement of the assault, although it was quite impossible to carry them beyond the first line of batteries. Mounted on them, however, as our troops were falling thick about me, I saw that we must ignominiously retreat, unless some other help could be found for our brave fellows to escalade the next wall. It was about seventy feet high—I instantly turned the guns of wall A on wall B, and peppered the latter so as to make not a breach, but a scaling-place, the men mounting in the holes made by the shot. By this simple stratagem, I managed to pass each successive barrier—for to ascend a wall, which the general was pleased to call ‘as smooth as glass,’ is an absurd impossibility. I seek to achieve none such:—

'I dare do all that may become a man,  
Who dares do more, is neither more nor less.'

Of course, had the enemy's guns been commonly well served, not one of us would ever have been alive out of the three; but whether it was owing to fright, or to the excessive smoke caused by so many pieces of artillery, arrive we did. On the platforms, too, our work was not quite so difficult as might be imagined—killing these fellows was sheer butchery. As soon as we appeared, they all turned and fled, helter-skelter, and the reader may judge of their courage by the fact that out of about seven hundred men killed by us, only forty had wounds in front, the rest being bayoneted as they ran.

And beyond all other pieces of good fortune was the very letting out of these tigers, which was the *dernier ressort* of Bournonville, the second commandant of the fort. I had observed this man (conspicuous for a tri-coloured scarf which he wore) upon every one of the walls as we stormed them, and running away the very first among the fugitives. He had all the keys of the gates; and in his tremor, as he opened the menagerie portal, left the whole bunch in the door, which I seized when the animals were overcome. Runtz Goss then opened them one by one, our troops entered, and the victorious standard of my country floated on the walls of Allyghur!

When the general, accompanied by his staff, entered the last line of fortifications, the brave old man raised me from the dead rhinoceros on which I was seated, and pressed me to his breast. But the excitement which had borne me through the fatigues and perils of that fearful day failed all of a sudden, and I wept like a child upon his shoulder.

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Promotion, in our army, goes unluckily by seniority; nor is it in the power of the general-in-chief to advance a Cæsar, if he finds him in the capacity of a subaltern: *my* reward for the above exploit was, therefore, not very rich. His excellency had a favourite horn snuff-box (for though exalted in station he was in his habits most simple): of this, and about a quarter of an ounce of high-dried Welsh, which he always took, he made me a present, saying, in front of the line, 'Accept this, Mr. Gahagan, as a token of respect from the first, to the bravest officer in this army.'

Calculating the snuff to be worth a halfpenny, I should say that fourpence was about the value of this gift; but it has at least this good effect—it serves to convince any person who doubts of my story, that the facts of it are really true. I have left it at the

office of my publisher, along with the extract from the *Bengal Hurkaru*, and anybody may examine both by applying in the counting-house of Mr. Cunningham.<sup>1</sup> That once popular expression, or proverb, 'Are you up to snuff?' arose out of the above circumstance; for the officers of my corps, none of whom, except myself, had ventured on the storming party, used to twit me about this modest reward for my labours. Never mind; when they want me to storm a fort *again*, I shall know better.

Well, immediately after the capture of this important fortress, Perron, who had been the life and soul of Scindiah's army, came in to us, with his family and treasure, and was passed over to the French settlements at Chandernagur. Bourquien took his command, and against him we now moved. The morning of the 11th of September found us upon the plains of Delhi.

It was a burning hot day, and we were all refreshing ourselves after the morning's march, when I, who was on the advanced picket along with O'Gawler of the King's Dragoons, was made aware of the enemy's neighbourhood in a very singular manner. O'Gawler and I were seated under a little canopy of horse-cloths, which we had formed to shelter us from the intolerable heat of the sun, and were discussing with great delight a few Manilla cheroots, and a stone jar of the most exquisite, cool, weak, refreshing sangaree. We had been playing cards the night before, and O'Gawler had lost to me seven hundred rupees. I emptied the last of the sangaree into the two pint tumblers out of which we were drinking, and holding mine up, said, 'Here's better luck to you next time, O'Gawler!'

As I spoke the words—whish!—a cannon-ball cut the tumbler clean out of my hand, and plumped into poor O'Gawler's stomach. It settled him completely, and of course I never got my seven hundred rupees. Such are the uncertainties of war!

To strap on my sabre and my accoutrements—to mount my Arab charger—to drink off what O'Gawler had left of the sangaree—and to gallop to the general, was the work of a moment. I found him as comfortably at tiffin as if he were at his own house in London.

'General,' said I, as soon as I got into his pajamahs (or tent), 'you must leave your lunch if you want to fight the enemy.'

'The enemy—psha! Mr. Gahagan, the enemy is on the other side of the river.'

<sup>1</sup> The Major certainly offered to leave an old snuff-box at Mr. Cunningham's office; but it contained no extract from a newspaper, and does not *quite* prove that he killed a rhinoceros, and stormed fourteen entrenchments at the siege of Allyghur.—M. A. T.

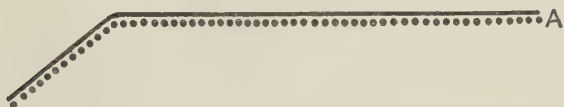


'I can only tell your excellency, that the enemy's guns will hardly carry five miles; and that Cornet O'Gawler was this moment shot dead at my side with a cannon-ball.'

'Ha! is it so?' said his excellency, rising, and laying down the drum-stick of a grilled chicken. 'Gentlemen, remember that the eyes of Europe are upon us, and follow me!'

Each aide-de-camp started from table and seized his cocked hat; each British heart beat high at the thoughts of the coming *mêlée*. We mounted our horses, and galloped swiftly after the brave old general; I not the last in the train, upon my famous black charger.

It was perfectly true, the enemy were posted in force within three miles of our camp, and from a hillock in the advance to which we galloped, we were enabled with our telescopes to see the whole of his imposing line. Nothing can better describe it than this:—



—A is the enemy, and the dots represent the hundred and twenty pieces of artillery which defended his line. He was, moreover, entrenched; and a wide morass in his front gave him an additional security.

His excellency for a moment surveyed the line, and then said, turning round to one of his aides-de-camp, 'Order up Major-General Tinkler and the cavalry.'

'Here, does your excellency mean?' said the aide-de-camp, surprised, for the enemy had perceived us, and the cannon-balls were flying about as thick as peas.

'Here, Sir,' said the old general, stamping with his foot in a passion, and the A.D.C. shrugged his shoulders and galloped away. In five minutes we heard the trumpets in our camp, and in twenty more the greater part of the cavalry had joined us.

Up they came, five thousand men, their standards flapping in the air, their long line of polished jack-boots gleaming in the golden sunlight. 'And now we are here,' said Major-General Sir Theophilus Tinkler, 'what next?' 'Oh, d—— it,' said the commander-in-chief, 'charge, charge—nothing like charging—galloping—guns—rascally black scoundrels—charge, charge!' And then, turning round to me (perhaps he was glad to change the con-

versation), he said, "Lieutenant Gahagan, you will stay with me."

And well for him I did, for I do not hesitate to say that the battle *was gained by me*. I do not mean to insult the reader by pretending that any personal exertions of mine turned the day,—that I killed, for instance, a regiment of cavalry, or swallowed a battery of guns,—such absurd tales would disgrace both the hearer and the teller. I, as is well known, never say a single word which cannot be proved, and hate more than all other vices the absurd sin of egotism; I simply mean that my *advice* to the general, at a quarter-past two o'clock in the afternoon of that day, won this great triumph for the British army.

Gleig, Mill, and Thorn have all told the tale of this war, though somehow they have omitted all mention of the hero of it. General Lake, for the victory of that day, became Lord Lake of Laswaree. Laswaree! and who forsooth was the real conqueror of Laswaree? I can lay my hand upon my heart, and say that *I* was. If any proof is wanting of the fact, let me give it at once, and from the highest military testimony in the world, I mean that of the EMPEROR NAPOLEON.

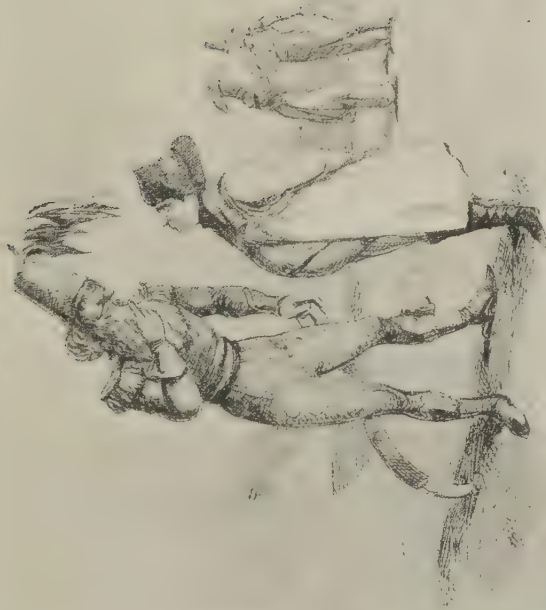
In the month of March, 1817, I was passenger on board the *Prince Regent*, Captain Harris, which touched at St. Helena on its passage from Calcutta to England. In company with the other officers on board the ship, I paid my respects to the illustrious exile of Longwood, who received us in his garden, where he was walking about in a nankeen dress and a large broad-brimmed straw hat, with General Montholon, Count Las Cases, and his son Emanuel, then a little boy, who I dare say does not recollect me, but who nevertheless played with my sword-knot and the tassels of my Hessian boots during the whole of our interview with his Imperial Majesty.

Our names were read out (in a pretty accent, by the way!) by General Montholon, and the Emperor, as each was pronounced, made a bow to the owner of it, but did not vouchsafe a word. At last Montholon came to mine. The Emperor looked me at once in the face, took his hands out of his pockets, put them behind his back, and coming up to me smiling, pronounced the following words:—

'Assye, Delhi, Deeg, Futtyghur?'

I blushed, and taking off my hat with a bow, said, 'Sire, c'est moi.'

'Parbleu! je le savais bien,' said the Emperor, holding out his snuff-box. 'En usez-vous, Major?' I took a large pinch (which, with the honour of speaking to so great a man, brought the tears



THE MAJOR'S INTERVIEW WITH A CELEBRATED CHARACTER.

into my eyes), and he continued as nearly as possible in the following words:—

‘Sir, you are known; you come of an heroic nation. Your third brother, the Chef de Bataillon, Count Godfrey Gahagan, was in my Irish Brigade.’

*Gahagan.* ‘Sire, it is true. He and my countrymen in your Majesty’s service stood under the green flag in the breach of Burgos, and beat Wellington back. It was the only time, as your Majesty knows, that Irishmen and Englishmen were beaten in that war.’

*Napoleon (looking as if he would say, ‘D—— your candour, Major Gahagan’).* ‘Well, well; it was so. Your brother was a Count, and died a General in my service.’

*Gahagan.* ‘He was found lying upon the bodies of nine-and-twenty Cossacks at Borodino. They were all dead, and bore the Gahagan mark.’

*Napoleon (to Montholon).* ‘C’est vrai, Montholon, je vous donne ma parole d’honneur la plus sacrée, que c’est vrai. Ils ne font pas d’autres, ces terribles Ga’gans. You must know that Monsieur gained the battle of Delhi as certainly as I did that of Austerlitz. In this way:—Ce belître de Lor Lake, after calling up his cavalry, and placing them in front of Holkar’s batteries, qui balayaient la plaine, was for charging the enemy’s batteries with his horse, who would have been écrasés, mitrillés, foudroyés to a man, but for the cunning of ce grand rouge que vous voyez.’

*Montholon.* ‘Coquin de Major, va!’

*Napoleon.* ‘Montholon! tais-toi. When Lord Lake, with his great bull-headed English obstinacy, saw the fâcheuse position into which he had brought his troops, he was for dying on the spot, and would infallibly have done so—and the loss of his army would have been the ruin of the East India Company—and the ruin of the English East India Company would have established my Empire (bah! it was a republic then!) in the East; but that the man before us, Lieutenant Goliah Gahagan, was riding at the side of General Lake.’

*Montholon (with an accent of despair and fury).* ‘Gredin! cent mille tonnerres de Dieu!’

*Napoleon (benignantly).* ‘Calme-toi, mon fidèle ami. What, will you? It was fate. Gahagan, at the critical period of the battle, or rather slaughter (for the English had not slain a man of the enemy), advised a retreat.’

*Montholon.* ‘Le lâche! Un Français meurt, mais il ne recule jamais.’

*Napoleon.* ‘Stupide! Don’t you see *why* the retreat was ordered?—don’t you know that it was a feint on the part of

Gahagan to draw Holkar from his impregnable entrenchments ! Don't you know that the ignorant Indian fell into the snare, and issuing from behind the cover of his guns, came down with his cavalry on the plain in pursuit of Lake and his dragoons ? Then it was that the Englishmen turned upon him ; the hardy children of the North swept down his feeble horsemen, bore them back to their guns, which were useless, entered Holkar's entrenchments along with his troops, sabred the artillerymen at their pieces, and won the battle of Delhi !'

As the Emperor spoke, his pale cheek glowed red, his eye flashed fire, his deep clear voice rang as of old, when he pointed out the enemy from beneath the shadow of the Pyramids, or rallied his regiments to the charge upon the death-strewn plain of Wagram. I have had many a proud moment in my life, but never such a proud one as this ; and I would readily pardon the word 'coward,' as applied to me by Montholon, in consideration of the testimony which his master bore in my favour.

'Major,' said the Emperor to me in conclusion, 'why had I not such a man as you in my service ? I would have made you a Prince and a Marshal !' and here he fell into a reverie, of which I knew and respected the purport. He was thinking, doubtless, that I might have retrieved his fortunes, and indeed I have very little doubt that I might.

Very soon after, coffee was brought by Monsieur Marchand, Napoleon's valet-de-chambre, and after partaking of that beverage, and talking upon the politics of the day, the Emperor withdrew, leaving me deeply impressed by the condescension he had shown in this remarkable interview.

### CHAPTER III.

#### A PEEP INTO SPAIN—ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN AND SERVICES OF THE AHMEDNUGGAR IRREGULARS.

HEADQUARTERS, MORELLA, *Sept.* 15, 1838.

I HAVE been here for some months, along with my young friend Cabrera ; and, in the hurry and bustle of war—daily on guard and in the batteries for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, with fourteen severe wounds, and seven musket-balls in my body—it may be imagined that I have had little time to think about the publication of my memoirs. *Inter arma silent leges*—in the midst of fighting be hanged to writing ! as the poet says ; and I never



would have bothered myself with a pen, had not common gratitude incited me to throw off a few pages. The publisher and editor of *The New Monthly Magazine* little know what service has been done to me by that miscellany.

Along with Oraa's troops, who have of late been beleaguering this place, there was a young Milesian gentleman, Mr. Toone O'Connor Emmett Fitzgerald Sheeny, by name, a law-student, and a member of Gray's Inn, and what he called *Bay Ah* of Trinity College, Dublin. Mr. Sheeny was with the Queen's people not in a military capacity, but as representative of an English journal, to which, for a trifling weekly remuneration, he was in the habit of transmitting accounts of the movements of the belligerents, and his own opinion of the politics of Spain. Receiving, for the discharge of this duty, a couple of guineas a week from the proprietors of the journal in question, he was enabled, as I need scarcely say, to make such a show in Oraa's camp as only a Christino general officer, or at the very least a colonel of a regiment, can afford to keep up.

In the famous sortie which we made upon the twenty-third, I was of course among the foremost in the *mêlée*, and found myself, after a good deal of slaughtering (which it would be as disagreeable as useless to describe here), in the court of a small inn or podesta, which had been made the headquarters of several Queenite officers during the siege. The pesatero or landlord of the inn had been despatched by my brave chapel-churies, with his fine family of children—the officers quartered in the podesta had of course bolted; but one man remained, and my fellows were on the point of cutting him into ten thousand pieces with their borachios, when I arrived in the room time enough to prevent the catastrophe. Seeing before me an individual in the costume of a civilian—a white hat, a light-blue satin cravat, embroidered with butterflies and other quadrupeds, a green coat and brass buttons, and a pair of blue-plaid trousers, I recognised at once a countryman, and interposed to save his life.

In an agonised brogue the unhappy young man was saying all that he could to induce the chapel-churies to give up their intentions of slaughtering him; but it is very little likely that his protestations would have had any effect upon them, had not I appeared in the room, and shouted to the ruffians to hold their hand.

Seeing a general officer before them (I have the honour to hold that rank in the service of His Catholic Majesty), and moreover one six feet four in height, and armed with that terrible *cabecilla* (a sword, so called, because it is five feet long) which is so well known among the Spanish armies—seeing, I say, this figure, the fellows retired, exclaiming, 'Adios, corpo di bacco, nosotros,' and

so on, clearly proving (by their words) that they would, if they dared, have immolated the victim whom I had thus rescued from their fury. 'Villains!' shouted I, hearing them grumble, 'away! quit the apartment!' Each man, sulkily sheathing his sombrero, obeyed, and quitted the camarilla.

It was then that Mr. Sheeny detailed to me the particulars to which I have briefly adverted; and, informing me at the same time that he had a family in England who would feel obliged to me for his release, and that his most intimate friend the English ambassador would move heaven and earth to revenge his fall, he directed my attention to a portmanteau passably well filled, which he hoped would satisfy the cupidity of my troops. I said, though with much regret, that I must subject his person to a search; and hence arose the circumstance which has called for what I fear you will consider a somewhat tedious explanation. I found upon Mr. Sheeny's person three sovereigns in English money (which I have to this day), and singularly enough a copy of *The New Monthly Magazine* for March, which contained my article. It was a toss-up whether I should let the poor young man be shot or no, but this little circumstance saved his life. The gratified vanity of authorship induced me to accept his portmanteau and valuables, and to allow the poor wretch to go free. I put the magazine in my coat-pocket, and left him and the podesta.

The men, to my surprise, had quitted the building, and it was full time for me to follow, for I found our sallying party, after committing dreadful ravages in Oraa's lines, were in full retreat upon the fort, hotly pressed by a superior force of the enemy. I am pretty well known and respected by the men of both parties in Spain (indeed I served for some months on the Queen's side before I came over to Don Carlos); and, as it is my maxim never to give quarter, I never expect to receive it when taken myself. On issuing from the podesta, with Sheeny's portmanteau and my sword in my hand, I was a little disgusted and annoyed to see our own men in a pretty good column, retreating at double-quick, and about four hundred yards beyond me up the hill leading to the fort, while on my left hand, and at only a hundred yards, a troop of the Queenite lancers were clattering along the road.

I had got into the very middle of the road before I made this discovery, so that the fellows had a full sight of me, and, whizz! came a bullet by my left whisker before I could say Jack Robinson. I looked round—there were seventy of the accursed *malvados* at the least, and within, as I said, a hundred yards. Were I to say that I stopped to fight seventy men, you would write me down a fool or a liar: no, Sir, I did not fight, I ran away.

I am six feet four—my figure is as well known in the Spanish army as that of the Count de Luchana, or my fierce little friend Cabrera himself. ‘GAHAGAN!’ shouted out half-a-dozen scoundrelly voices, and fifty more shots came rattling after me. I was running, —running as the brave stag before the hounds—running as I have done a great number of times before in my life, when there was no help for it but a race.

After I had run about five hundred yards, I saw that I had gained nearly three upon our column in front, and that likewise the Christino horsemen were left behind some hundred yards more, with the exception of three, who were fearfully near me. The first was an officer without a lance; he had fired both his pistols at me, and was twenty yards in advance of his comrades; there was a similar distance between the two lancers who rode behind him. I determined then to wait for No. 1, and as he came up delivered cut 3 at his horse’s near leg—off it flew, and down, as I expected, went horse and man. I had hardly time to pass my sword through my prostrate enemy, when No. 2 was upon me. If I could but get that fellow’s horse thought I, I am safe, and I executed at once the plan which I hoped was to effect my rescue.

I had, as I said, left the podesta with Sheeny’s portmanteau, and, unwilling to part with some of the articles it contained—some shirts, a bottle of whiskey, a few cakes of Windsor soap, etc. etc.,—I had carried it thus far on my shoulders, but now was compelled to sacrifice it *malgré moi*. As the lancer came up, I dropped my sword from my right hand, and hurled the portmanteau at his head, with aim so true, that he fell back on his saddle like a sack, and thus, when the horse galloped up to me, I had no difficulty in dismounting the rider—the whiskey-bottle struck him over his right eye, and he was completely stunned. To dash him from the saddle and spring myself into it was the work of a moment; indeed, the two combats had taken place in about a fifth part of the time which it has taken the reader to peruse the description. But in the rapidity of the last encounter, and the mounting of my enemy’s horse, I had committed a very absurd oversight—I was scampering away *without my sword*! What was I to do?—to scamper on, to be sure, and trust to the legs of my horse for safety!

The lancer behind me gained on me every moment, and I could hear his horrid laugh as he neared me. I leaned forward jockey-fashion in my saddle, and kicked, and urged, and flogged with my hand, but all in vain. Closer—closer—the point of his lance was within two feet of my back. Ah! ah! he delivered the point, and fancy my agony when I felt it enter—through exactly fifty-nine pages of *The New Monthly Magazine*. Had it not been for *The*

*New Monthly Magazine and Humourist*, I should have been impaled without a shadow of a doubt. Am I wrong in feeling gratitude? Have I not cause to continue my contributions?

When I got safe into Morella, along with the tail of the sallying party, I was for the first time made acquainted with the ridiculous result of the lancer's thrust (as he delivered his lance, I must tell you that a ball came whizz over my head from our fellows, and, entering at his nose, put a stop to *his* lancing for the future). I hastened to Cabrera's quarter, and related to him some of my adventures during the day.

'But, General,' said he, 'you are standing. I beg you "*chiudete l'uscio*" (take a chair).'

I did so, and then for the first time was aware that there was some foreign substance in the tail of my coat, which prevented my sitting at ease. I drew out the magazine which I had seized, and there, to my wonder, *discovered the Christino lance* twisted up like a fish-hook, or a pastoral crook.

'Ha! ha! ha!' said Cabrera (who is a notorious wag).

'Valdepeñas madrileños,' growled out Tristany.

'By my cachuca di caballero' (upon my honour as a gentleman), shrieked out Ros d'Eroles, convulsed with laughter, 'I will send it to the Bishop of Leon for a crozier.'

'Gahagan has *consecrated* it,' giggled out Ramon Cabrera; and so they went on with their muchacas for an hour or more. But when they heard that the means of my salvation from the lance of the scoundrelly Christino had been the magazine containing my own history, their laugh was changed into wonder. I read them (speaking Spanish more fluently than English) every word of my story.

'But how is this?' said Cabrera. 'You surely have other adventures to relate?'

'Excellent sir,' said I, 'I have;' and that very evening, as we sat over our cups of tertullia (sangaree), I continued my narrative in nearly the following words:—

'I left off in the very middle of the battle of Delhi, which ended, as everybody knows, in the complete triumph of the British arms. But who gained the battle? Lord Lake is called Viscount Lake of Delhi and Laswaree, while Major Gaha—nonsense, never mind *him*, never mind the charge he executed when, sabre in hand, he leaped the six-foot wall in the mouth of the roaring cannon, over the heads of the gleaming pikes, when, with one hand seizing the sacred peish-cush, or fish—which was the banner always borne before Scindiah,—he, with his good sword, cut off the trunk of the famous white elephant, which, shrieking with agony, plunged madly into the Mahratta ranks, followed by his giant brethren, tossing, like

chaff before the wind, the affrighted kitmatgars. He, meanwhile, now plunging into the midst of a battalion of consumahs, now cleaving to the chine a screaming and ferocious bobbachee,<sup>1</sup> rushed on, like the simoom across the red Zaharan plain, killing, with his own hand, a hundred and forty-thr—but never mind—“*alone he did it* ;” sufficient be it for him, however, that the victory was won ; he cares not for the empty honours which were awarded to more fortunate men !

‘We marched after the battle to Delhi, where poor blind old Shah Allum received us, and bestowed all kinds of honours and titles on our general. As each of the officers passed before him, the Shah did not fail to remark my person,<sup>2</sup> and was told my name.

‘Lord Lake whispered to him my exploits, and the old man was so delighted with the account of my victory over the elephant (whose trunk I use to this day), that he said, “Let him be called GUJPUTI,” or the lord of elephants ; and Gujputi was the name by which I was afterwards familiarly known among the natives,—the men, that is. The women had a softer appellation for me, and called me “Mushook,” or charmer.

‘Well, I shall not describe Delhi, which is doubtless well known to the reader ; nor the siege of Agra, to which place we went from Delhi ; nor the terrible day at Laswaree, which went nigh to finish the war. Suffice it to say that we were victorious, and that I was wounded, as I have invariably been in the two hundred and four occasions when I have found myself in action. One point, however, became in the course of this campaign *quite* evident—that *something must be done for Gahagan*. The country cried shame, the king’s troops grumbled, the sepoys openly murmured that their Gujputi was only a lieutenant, when he had performed such signal services. What was to be done ? Lord Wellesley was in an evident quandary. “Gahagan,” wrote he, “to be a subaltern is evidently not your fate—you were born for command ; but Lake and General Wellesley are good officers, they cannot be turned out—I must make a post for you. What say you, my dear fellow, to a corps of *irregular horse* ?”

‘It was thus that the famous corps of AHMEDNUGGAR IRREGULARS had its origin ; a guerilla force, it is true, but one which will long be remembered in the annals of our Indian campaigns.

<sup>1</sup> The double-jointed camel of Bactria, which the classic reader may recollect is mentioned by Suidas (in his Commentary on the Flight of Darius), is so called by the Mahrattas.

<sup>2</sup> There is some trifling inconsistency on the Major’s part. Shah Allum was notoriously blind : how, then, could he have seen Gahagan ? The thing is manifestly impossible.



‘As the commander of this regiment, I was allowed to settle the uniform of the corps, as well as to select recruits. These were not wanting as soon as my appointment was made known, but came flocking to my standard a great deal faster than to the regular corps in the company’s service. I had European officers, of course, to command them, and a few of my countrymen as sergeants ; the rest were all natives, whom I chose of the strongest and bravest men in India, chiefly Pitans, Afghans, Hurrumzadehs, and Calliawns, for these are well known to be the most warlike districts of our Indian territory.

‘When on parade and in full uniform we made a singular and noble appearance. I was always fond of dress ; and, in this instance, gave a *carte-blanche* to my taste, and invented the most splendid costume that ever perhaps decorated a soldier. I am, as I have stated already, six feet four inches in height, and of matchless symmetry and proportion. My hair and beard are of the most brilliant auburn, so bright as scarcely to be distinguished at a distance from scarlet. My eyes are bright blue, overshadowed by bushy eyebrows of the colour of my hair, and a terrific gash of the deepest purple, which goes over the forehead, the eyelid, and the cheek, and finishes at the ear, gives my face a more strictly military appearance than can be conceived. When I have been drinking (as is pretty often the case) this gash becomes ruby bright, and as I have another which took off a piece of my underlip, and shows five of my front teeth, I leave you to imagine that “seldom lighted on the earth” (as the monster Burke remarked of one of his unhappy victims) “a more extraordinary vision.” I improved these natural advantages ; and, while in cantonment during the hot winds at Chittybobbary, allowed my hair to grow very long, as did my beard, which reached to my waist. It took me two hours daily to curl my hair in ten thousand little corkscrew ringlets, which waved over my shoulders, and to get my moustachios well round to the corners of my eyelids. I dressed in loose scarlet trousers and red morocco boots, a scarlet jacket, and a shawl of the same colour round my waist ; a scarlet turban three feet high, and decorated with a tuft of the scarlet feathers of the flamingo, formed my head-dress, and I did not allow myself a single ornament, except a small silver skull and cross-bones in front of my turban. Two brace of pistols, a Malay creese, and a tulwar, sharp on both sides, and very nearly six feet in length, completed this elegant costume. My two flags were each surmounted with a real skull and cross-bones, and ornamented one with a black, and the other with a red beard (of enormous length, taken from men slain in battle by me). On one flag were of

course the arms of John Company; on the other, an image of myself bestriding a prostrate elephant, with the simple word "GUJRUTI" written underneath in the Nagaree, Persian, and Sanscrit character. I rode my black horse, and looked, by the immortal gods, like Mars! To me might be applied the words which were written concerning handsome General Webb, in Marlborough's time:

"To noble danger he conducts the way,  
His great example all his troop obey,  
Before the front the MAJOR sternly rides,  
With such an air as Mars to battle strides.  
Propitious heaven must sure a hero save  
Like Paris handsome, and like Hector brave!"

'My officers (Captains Biggs and Mackanulty, Lieutenants Glogger, Pappendick, Stuffle, etc. etc.) were dressed exactly in the same way, but in yellow, and the men were similarly equipped, but in black. I have seen many regiments since, and many ferocious-looking men, but the Ahmednuggar Irregulars were more dreadful to the view than any set of ruffians on which I ever set eyes. I would to heaven that the Czar of Muscovy had passed through Caubul and Lahore, and that I with my old Ahmednuggars stood on a fair field to meet him! Bless you, bless you, my swart companions in victory! through the mist of twenty years I hear the booming of your war-cry, and mark the glitter of your scimitars as ye rage in the thickest of the battle!<sup>1</sup>

'But away with melancholy reminiscences. You may fancy what a figure the Irregulars cut on a field-day—a line of five hundred black-faced, black-dressed, black-horsed, black-bearded men—Biggs, Glogger, and the other officers in yellow, galloping about the field like flashes of lightning: myself enlightening them, red, solitary, and majestic, like yon glorious orb in heaven.

'There are very few men, I presume, who have not heard of Holkar's sudden and gallant incursion into the Dooâb, in the year 1804, when we thought that the victory of Laswaree and the brilliant success at Deeg had completely finished him. Taking ten thousand horse, he broke up his camp at Palimbang; and the first thing General Lake heard of him was, that he was at Putna, then at Rumpooge, then at Doncaradam—he was, in fact, in the very heart of our territory.

<sup>1</sup> I do not wish to brag of my style of writing, or to pretend that my genius as a writer has not been equalled in former times; but if, in the works of Byron, Scott, Goethe, or Victor Hugo, the reader can find a more beautiful sentence than the above, I will be obliged to him, that is all—I simply say, *I will be obliged to him*.—G. O'G. G., M.H.E.I.C.S., C.I.H.A.

‘The unfortunate part of the affair was this :—His Excellency, despising the Mahratta chieftain, had allowed him to advance about two thousand miles in his front, and knew not in the slightest degree where to lay hold on him. Was he at Hazarubaug? was he at Bogly Gunge? nobody knew, and for a considerable period the movements of Lake’s cavalry were quite ambiguous, uncertain, promiscuous, and undetermined.

‘Such briefly was the state of affairs in October 1804. At the beginning of that month I had been wounded (a trifling scratch cutting off my left upper eyelid, a bit of my cheek, and my underlip), and I was obliged to leave Biggs in command of my Irregulars, whilst I retired for my wounds to an English station at Furruckabad, *alias* Futtighur—it is, as every twopenny postman knows, at the apex of the Dooâb. We have there a cantonment, and thither I went for the mere sake of the surgeon and the sticking-plaster.

‘Furruckabad, then, is divided into two districts or towns; the lower Cotwal, inhabited by the natives, and the upper (which is fortified slightly, and has all along been called Futtighur, meaning in Hindostanee “the-favourite-resort-of-the-white-faced-Feringhees-near-the-mango-tope-consecrated-to-Ram”), occupied by Europeans. (It is astonishing, by the way, how comprehensive that language is, and how much can be conveyed in one or two of the commonest phrases.)

‘Biggs, then, and my men were playing all sorts of wondrous pranks with Lord Lake’s army, whilst I was detained an unwilling prisoner of health at Futtighur.

‘An unwilling prisoner, however, I should not say. The cantonment at Futtighur contained that which would have made *any* man a happy slave. Woman, lovely woman, was there in abundance and variety! The fact is, that, when the campaign commenced in 1803, the ladies of the army all congregated to this place, where they were left, as it was supposed, in safety. I might, like Homer, relate the names and qualities of all. I may at least mention *some* whose memory is still most dear to me. There was—

‘Mrs. Major-General Bulcher, wife of Bulcher of the Infantry.

‘Miss Bulcher.

‘MISS BELINDA BULCHER (whose name I beg the printer to place in large capitals).

‘Mrs. Colonel Vandegobbleschroy.

‘Mrs. Major Macan and the four Misses Macan.

‘The Honourable Mrs. Burgoo, Mrs. Flix, Hicks, Wicks, and many more too numerous to mention. The flower of our camp was, however, collected there, and the last words of Lord Lake to

me, as I left him, were, "Gahagan, I commit those women to your charge. Guard them with your life, watch over them with your honour, defend them with the matchless power of your indomitable arm."

'Futtyghur is, as I have said, an European station, and the pretty air of the bungalows, amid the clustering topes of mango-trees, has often ere this excited the admiration of the tourist and sketcher. On the brow of a hill, the Burrumpooter river rolls majestically at its base, and no spot, in a word, can be conceived more exquisitely arranged, both by art and nature, as a favourite residence of the British fair. Mrs. Bulcher, Mrs. Vandegobbleschroy, and the other married ladies above mentioned had each of them delightful bungalows and gardens in the place, and between one cottage and another my time passed as delightfully as can the hours of any man who is away from his darling occupation of war.

'I was the commandant of the fort. It is a little insignificant pettah, defended simply by a couple of gabions, a very ordinary counterscarp, and a bomb-proof embrasure; on the top of this my flag was planted, and the small garrison of forty men only were comfortably barracked off in the casemates within. A surgeon and two chaplains (there were besides three reverend gentlemen of amateur missions, who lived in the town) completed, as I may say, the garrison of our little fortalice, which I was left to defend and to command.

'On the night of the first of November, in the year 1804, I had invited Mrs. Major-General Bulcher and her daughters; Mrs. Vandegobbleschroy, and, indeed, all the ladies in the cantonment, to a little festival in honour of the recovery of my health, of the commencement of the shooting season, and indeed as a farewell visit, for it was my intention to take dawk the very next morning and return to my regiment. The three amateur missionaries whom I have mentioned, and some ladies in the cantonment of very rigid religious principles, refused to appear at my little party. They had better never have been born than have done as they did, as you shall hear.

'We had been dancing merrily all night, and the supper (chiefly of the delicate condor, the luscious adjutant, and other birds of a similar kind, which I had shot in the course of the day) had been duly *fêted* by every lady and gentleman present, when I took an opportunity to retire on the ramparts with the interesting and lovely Belinda Bulcher. I was occupied, as the French say, in *conter-ing fleurettes* to this sweet young creature, when, all of a sudden, a rocket was seen whizzing through the air, and a strong light was visible in the valley below the little fort.

“What, fireworks! Captain Gahagan,” said Belinda; “this is too gallant.”

“Indeed, my dear Miss Bulcher,” said I, “they are fireworks of which I have no idea: perhaps our friends the missionaries——”

“Look, look!” said Belinda, trembling, and clutching tightly hold of my arm; “what do I see?—yes—no—yes! it is—*our bungalow is in flames!*”

‘It was true; the spacious bungalow occupied by Mrs. Major-General was at that moment seen a prey to the devouring element—another and another succeeded it—seven bungalows, before I could almost ejaculate the name of Jack Robinson, were seen blazing brightly in the black midnight air!

‘I seized my night-glass, and, looking towards the spot where the conflagration raged, what was my astonishment to see thousands of black forms dancing round the fires; whilst by their lights I could observe columns after columns of Indian horse, arriving and taking up their ground in the very middle of the open square or tank, round which the bungalows were built!

“Ho, warder!” shouted I (while the frightened and trembling Belinda clung closer to my side, and pressed the stalwart arm that encircled her waist), “down with the drawbridge! see that your masolgees (small tumbrils which are used in place of large artillery) be well loaded. You sepoy, hasten and man the ravelin! you choprasees, put out the lights in the embrasures! we shall have warm work of it to-night, or my name is not Goliah Gahagan.”

‘The ladies, the guests (to the number of eighty-three), the sepoy, choprasees, masolgees, and so on, had all crowded on the platform at the sound of my shouting, and dreadful was the consternation, shrill the screaming, occasioned by my words. The men stood irresolute and mute with terror; the women, trembling, knew scarcely whither to fly for refuge. “Who are yonder ruffians?” said I; a hundred voices yelped in reply—some said the Pindarees, some said the Mahrattas, some vowed it was Scindiah, and others declared it was Holkar—no one knew.

“Is there any one here,” said I, “who will venture to reconnoitre yonder troops?” There was a dead pause.

“A thousand tomauns to the man who will bring me news of yonder army!” again I repeated. Still a dead silence. The fact was that Scindiah and Holkar both were so notorious for their cruelty, that no one dared venture to face the danger. “Oh for fifty of my brave Ahmednuggarees!” thought I.

“Gentlemen,” said I, “I see it—you are cowards—none of you dare encounter the chance even of death. It is an encourag-



ing prospect. Know you not that the ruffian Holkar, if it be he, will with the morrow's dawn beleaguer our little fort, and throw thousands of men against our walls? Know you not that, if we are taken, there is no quarter, no hope; death for us—and worse than death for these lovely ones assembled here?" Here the ladies shrieked and raised a howl as I have heard the jackals on a summer's evening. Belinda, my dear Belinda! flung both her arms round me, and sobbed on my shoulder (or in my waistcoat pocket rather, for the little witch could reach no higher).

"Captain Gahagan," sobbed she, "*Go—Go—Goggle—iah!*"

"My soul's adored!" replied I.

"Swear to me one thing."

"I swear."

"That if—that if—the nasty, horrid, odious, black Mah-ra-a-attahs take the fort, you will put me out of their power."

'I clasped the dear girl to my heart, and swore upon my sword that, rather than she should incur the risk of dishonour, she should perish by my own hand. This comforted her; and her mother, Mrs. Major-General Bulcher, and her elder sister, who had not until now known a word of our attachment (indeed, but for these extraordinary circumstances, it is probable that we ourselves should never have discovered it), were under these painful circumstances made aware of my beloved Belinda's partiality for me. Having communicated thus her wish of self-destruction, I thought her example a touching and excellent one, and proposed to all the ladies that they should follow it, and that at the entry of the enemy into the fort, and at a signal given by me, they should one and all make away with themselves. Fancy my disgust when, after making this proposition, not one of the ladies chose to accede to it, and received it with the same chilling denial that my former proposal to the garrison had met with.

'In the midst of this hurry and confusion, as if purposely to add to it, a trumpet was heard at the gate of the fort, and one of the sentinels came running to me, saying that a Mahratta soldier was before the gate with a flag of truce!

'I went down, rightly conjecturing, as it turned out, that the party, whoever they might be, had no artillery; and received at the point of my sword a scroll, of which the following is a translation:—

"TO GOLIAH GAHAGAN GUJPUTI

"LORD OF ELEPHANTS, SIR—I have the honour to inform you that I arrived before this place at eight o'clock P.M. with ten thousand cavalry under my orders. I have burned, since my

arrival, seventeen bungalows in Furruckabad and Futtoghur, and have likewise been under the painful necessity of putting to death three clergymen (mollahs) and seven English officers whom I found in the village; the women have been transferred to safe keeping in the harems of my officers and myself.

“As I know your courage and talents, I shall be very happy if you will surrender the fortress, and take service as a major-general (hookabadar) in my army. Should my proposal not meet with your assent, I beg leave to state that to-morrow I shall storm the fort, and, on taking it, shall put to death every male in the garrison, and every female above twenty years of age. For yourself I shall reserve a punishment, which, for novelty and exquisite torture, has, I flatter myself, hardly ever been exceeded. Awaiting the favour of a reply, I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

JASWUNT ROW HOLKAR.

“CAMP BEFORE FUTTYGHUR, *Sept. 1, 1804.*

“R.S.V.P.”

‘The officer who had brought this precious epistle (it is astonishing how Holkar had aped the forms of English correspondence), an enormous Pitan soldier, with a shirt of mail, and a steel cap and cape round which his turban wound, was leaning against the gate on his matchlock, and whistling a national melody. I read the letter, and saw at once there was no time to be lost. That man, thought I, must never go back to Holkar. Were he to attack us now before we were prepared, the fort would be his in half-an-hour.

‘Tying my white pocket-handkerchief to a stick, I flung open the gate and advanced to the officer; he was standing, I said, on the little bridge across the moat. I made him a low salaam, after the fashion of the country, and, as he bent forward to return the compliment, I am sorry to say, I plunged forward, gave him a violent blow on the head which deprived him of all sensation, and then dragged him within the wall, raising the drawbridge after me.

‘I bore the body into my own apartment; there, swift as thought, I stripped him of his turban, cummerbund, peijammahs, and papooshes, and, putting them on myself, determined to go forth and reconnoitre the enemy.’

Here I was obliged to stop, for Cabrera, Ros d'Eroles, and the rest of the staff, were sound asleep! What I did in my reconnaissance, and how I defended the fort of Futtoghur, I shall have the honour of telling on another occasion.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE INDIAN CAMP—THE SORTIE FROM THE FORT.

HEADQUARTERS, MORELLA, *October 3, 1838.*

It is a balmy night. I hear the merry jingle of the tambourine, and the cheery voices of the girls and peasants, as they dance beneath my casement, under the shadow of the clustering vines. The laugh and song pass gaily round, and even at this distance I can distinguish the elegant form of Ramon Cabrera, as he whispers gay nothings in the ears of the Andalusian girls, or joins in the thrilling chorus of Riego's hymn, which is ever and anon vociferated by the enthusiastic soldiery of Carlos Quinto. I am alone, in the most inaccessible and most bomb-proof tower of our little fortalice; the large casements are open—the wind, as it enters, whispers in my ear its odorous recollections of the orange grove and the myrtle bower. My torch (a branch of the fragrant cedar-tree) flares and flickers in the midnight breeze, and disperses its scent and burning splinters on my scroll and the desk where I write—meet implements for a soldier's authorship!—it is *cartridge* paper over which my pen runs so glibly, and a yawning barrel of gunpowder forms my rough writing-table. Around me, below me, above me, all—all is peace! I think, as I sit here so lonely, on my country, England! and muse over the sweet and bitter recollections of my early days! Let me resume my narrative at the point where (interrupted by the authoritative summons of war) I paused on the last occasion.

I left off, I think (for I am a thousand miles away from proof-sheets as I write—and, were I not writing the simple TRUTH, must contradict myself a thousand times in the course of my tale), I think, I say, that I left off at that period of my story, when, Holkar being before Futtyghur, and I in command of that fortress, I had just been compelled to make away with his messenger; and, dressed in the fallen Indian's accoutrements, went forth to reconnoitre the force, and, if possible, to learn the intentions of the enemy. However much my figure might have resembled that of the Pitan, and, disguised in his armour, might have deceived the lynx-eyed Mahrattas, into whose camp I was about to plunge, it was evident that a single glance at my fair face and auburn beard would have undeceived the dullest blockhead in Holkar's army. Seizing, then, a bottle of Burgess's walnut catsup, I dyed my face and my hands, and, with the simple aid of a flask of Warren's jet,

I made my hair and beard as black as ebony. The Indian's helmet and chain hood covered likewise a great part of my face, and I hoped thus, with luck, impudence, and a complete command of all the Eastern dialects and languages, from Burmah to Afghanistan, to pass scot-free through this somewhat dangerous ordeal.

I had not the word of the night, it is true—but I trusted to good fortune for that, and passed boldly out of the fortress, bearing the flag of truce as before; I had scarcely passed on a couple of hundred yards, when, lo! a party of Indian horsemen, armed like him I had just overcome, trotted towards me. One was leading a noble white charger, and no sooner did he see me than, dismounting from his own horse, and giving the rein to a companion, he advanced to meet me with the charger; a second fellow likewise dismounted and followed the first; one held the bridle of the horse, while the other (with a multitude of salaams, aleikums, and other genuflections) held the jewelled stirrup, and kneeling, waited until I should mount.

I took the hint at once: the Indian who had come up to the fort was a great man—that was evident; I walked on with a majestic air, gathered up the velvet reins, and sprang into the magnificent high-peaked saddle. 'Buk, buk,' said I, 'it is good—in the name of the forty-nine Imaums, let us ride on;' and the whole party set off at a brisk trot, I keeping silence, and thinking with no little trepidation of what I was about to encounter.

As we rode along, I heard two of the men commenting upon my unusual silence (for I suppose, I—that is, the Indian—was a talkative officer). 'The lips of the Bahawder are closed,' said one; 'where are those birds of Paradise, his long-tailed words? they are imprisoned between the golden bars of his teeth!'

'Kush,' said his companion, 'be quiet! Bobbachy Bahawder has seen the dreadful Feringhee, Gahagan Khan Gujputi, the elephant-lord, whose sword reaps the harvest of death: there is but one champion who can wear the papooshes of the elephant-slayer—it is Bobbachy Bahawder!'

'You speak truly, Puneeree Muckun, the Bahawder ruminates on the words of the unbeliever; he is an ostrich, and hatches the eggs of his thoughts.'

'Bekhusm! on my nose be it! May the young birds, his actions, be strong, and swift in flight.'

'May they *digest iron*!' said Puneeree Muckun, who was evidently a wag in his way.

O ho! thought I, as suddenly the light flashed upon me. It was, then, the famous Bobbachy Bahawder whom I overcame

just now ! and he is the man destined to stand in *my* slippers, is he ? and I was at that very moment standing in his own ! Such are the chances and changes that fall to the lot of the soldier !

I suppose everybody—everybody who has been in India, at least,—has heard the name of Bobbachy Bahawder ; it is derived from the two Hindostanee words—*bobbachy*, general ; *bahawder*, artilleryman. He had entered into Holkar's service in the latter capacity, and had, by his merit and his undaunted bravery in action, attained the dignity of the peacock's feather, which is only granted to noblemen of the first class ; he was married, moreover, to one of Holkar's innumerable daughters ; a match which, according to the *Chronique Scandaleuse*, brought more of honour than of pleasure to the poor Bobbachy. Gallant as he was in the field, it was said that in the harem he was the veriest craven alive—completely subjugated by his ugly and odious wife. In all matters of importance the late Bahawder had been consulted by his prince, who had, as it appears (knowing my character, and not caring to do anything rash in his attack upon so formidable an enemy), sent forward the unfortunate Pitan to reconnoitre the fort ; he was to have done yet more, as I learned from the attendant, Puneeree Muckun, who was, I soon found out, an old favourite with the Bobbachy—doubtless on account of his honesty and love of repartee.

'The Bahawder's lips are closed,' said he, at last, trotting up to me ; 'has he not a word for old Puneeree Muckun ?'

'Bismillah, mashallah, barikillah,' said I ; which means, 'my good friend, what I have seen is not worth the trouble of relation, and fills my bosom with the darkest forebodings.'

'You could not then see the Gujputi alone, and stab him with your dagger ?'

[Here was a pretty conspiracy !] 'No, I saw him, but not alone ; his people were always with him.'

'Hurruzadeh ! it is a pity ; we waited but the sound of your jogree (whistle), and straightway would have galloped up and seized upon every man, woman, and child in the fort : however, there are but a dozen men in the garrison, and they have not provision for two days—they must yield ; and then, hurrah for the moon-faces ! Mashallah ! I am told the soldiers who first get in are to have their pick. How my old woman, Rotee Muckun, will be surprised when I bring home a couple of Feringhee wives,—ha ! ha !'

'Fool !' said I, 'be still !—twelve men in the garrison ! there are twelve hundred ! Gahagan himself is as good as a thousand men ; and as for food, I saw, with my own eyes, five hundred bullocks grazing in the courtyard as I entered.' This *was* a



bouncer, I confess ; but my object was to deceive Puneeree Muckun, and give him as high a notion as possible of the capabilities of defence which the besieged had.

‘Pooch, pooch,’ murmured the men ; ‘it is a wonder of a fortress, we shall never be able to take it until our guns come up.’

There was hope then ! they had no battering train. Ere this arrived, I trusted that Lord Lake would hear of our plight, and march down to rescue us. Thus occupied in thought and conversation, we rode on until the advanced sentinel challenged us, when old Puneeree gave the word, and we passed on into the centre of Holkar’s camp.

It was a strange—a stirring sight ! The camp-fires were lighted ; and round them—eating, reposing, talking, looking at the merry steps of the dancing girls, or listening to the stories of some Dhol Baut (or Indian improvisatore)—were thousands of dusky soldiery. The camels and horses were picketed under the banyan-trees, on which the ripe mango fruit was growing, and offered them an excellent food. Towards the spot which the golden fish and royal purdahs, floating in the wind, designated as the tent of Holkar, led an immense avenue—of elephants ! the finest street, indeed, I ever saw. Each of the monstrous animals had castles on their backs, armed with Mauritanian archers and the celebrated Persian matchlock-men : it was the feeding-time of these royal brutes, and the grooms were observed bringing immense toffungs or baskets, filled with pine-apples, plantains, bandannas, Indian corn, and cocoanuts, which grow luxuriantly at all seasons of the year. We passed down this extraordinary avenue (no less than three hundred and eighty-eight tails did I count on each side—each tail appertaining to an elephant twenty-five feet high—each elephant having a two-storied castle on its back—each castle containing sleeping and eating rooms for the twelve men that formed its garrison, and were keeping watch on the roof—each roof bearing a flag-staff twenty feet long on its top, the crescent glistening with a thousand gems, and round it the imperial standard,—each standard, of silk velvet and cloth of gold, bearing the well-known device of Holkar, argent an or gules, between a sinople of the first, a chevron, truncated, wavy. I took nine of these myself in the course of a very short time after, and shall be happy, when I come to England, to show them to any gentleman who has a curiosity that way. Through this gorgeous scene our little cavalcade passed, and at last we arrived at the quarters occupied by Holkar.

That celebrated chieftain’s tents and followers were gathered round one of the British bungalows which had escaped the flames, and which he occupied during the siege. When I entered the large

room where he sate, I found him in the midst of a council of war ; his chief generals and viziers seated round him, each smoking his hookah, as is the common way with these black fellows, before, at, and after breakfast, dinner, supper and bedtime. There was such a cloud raised by their smoke you could hardly see a yard before you—another piece of good-luck for me—as it diminished the chances of my detection. When, with the ordinary ceremonies, the kitmatgars and consumahs had explained to the prince that Bobbachy Bahawder, the right eye of the Sun of the Universe (as the ignorant heathens called me), had arrived from his mission, Holkar immediately summoned me to the maidaun, or elevated platform, on which he was seated in a luxurious easy-chair, and I, instantly taking off my slippers, falling on my knees, and beating my head against the ground ninety-nine times, proceeded, still on my knees, a hundred and twenty feet through the room, and then up the twenty steps which led to his maidaun—a silly, painful, and disgusting ceremony, which can only be considered as a relic of barbarian darkness, which tears the knees and shins to pieces, let alone the pantaloons. I recommend anybody who goes to India, with the prospect of entering the service of the native rajahs, to recollect my advice, and have them *well wadded*.

Well, the right eye of the Sun of the Universe scrambled as well as he could up the steps of the maidaun (on which, in rows, smoking as I have said, the musnuds or general officers were seated), and I arrived within speaking distance of Holkar, who instantly asked me news of the success of my mission. The impetuous old man thereon poured out a multitude of questions : ‘How many men are there in the fort?’ said he ; ‘how many women ? Is it victualled ? have they ammunition ? Did you see Gahagan Sahib, the commander ? did you kill him ?’

All these questions Jeswunt Row Holkar puffed out with so many whiffs of tobacco.

Taking a chillum myself, and raising about me such a cloud, that, upon my honour as a gentleman, no man at three yards’ distance could perceive anything of me except the pillar of smoke in which I was encompassed, I told Holkar, in Oriental language, of course, the best tale I could with regard to the fort.

‘Sir,’ said I, ‘to answer your last question first—that dreadful Gujputi I have seen—and he is alive ; he is eight feet, nearly, in height ; he can eat a bullock daily (of which he has seven hundred at present in the compound, and swears that during the siege he will content himself with only three a week) : he has lost, in battle, his left eye ; and what is the consequence ? O Ram Gunge (O

thou-with-the-eye-as-bright-as-morning-and-with-beard-as-black-as-night), Goliah Gujputi—NEVER SLEEPS !’

‘Ah, you Ghorumsaug’ (you thief of the world), said the Prince Vizier, Saadut Allee Beg Bimbukchee—‘it’s joking you are ;’—and there was a universal buzz through the room at the announcement of this bouncer.

‘By the hundred and eleven incarnations of Vishnou,’ said I solemnly (an oath which no Indian was ever known to break), ‘I swear that so it is ; so at least he told me, and I have good cause to know his power. Gujputi is an enchanter, he is leagued with devils, he is invulnerable. Look,’ said I, unsheathing my dagger, and every eye turned instantly towards me—‘thrice did I stab him with this steel—in the back, once—twice right through the heart ; but he only laughed me to scorn, and bade me tell Holkar that the steel was not yet forged which was to inflict an injury upon him.’

I never saw a man in such a rage as Holkar was when I gave him this somewhat imprudent message.

‘Ah, lily-livered rogue !’ shouted he out to me, ‘milk-blooded unbeliever ! pale-faced miscreant ! lives he after insulting thy master in thy presence ? In the name of the Prophet, I spit on thee, defy thee, abhor thee, degrade thee ! Take that, thou liar of the universe ! and that—and that—and that !’

Such are the frightful excesses of barbaric minds ! every time this old man said, ‘Take that,’ he flung some article near him at the head of the undaunted Gahagan—his dagger, his sword, his carbine, his richly-ornamented pistols, his turban, covered with jewels, worth a hundred thousand crores of rupees—finally, his hookah, snake, mouthpiece, silver-bell, chillum and all—which went hissing over my head, and flattening into a jelly the nose of the Grand Vizier.

‘Yock muzzee !’ ‘my nose is off,’ said the old man mildly ; ‘will you have my life, O Holkar ? it is thine likewise !’ and no other word of complaint escaped his lips.

Of all these missiles, though a pistol and carbine had gone off as the ferocious Indian flung them at my head, and the naked scimitar, fiercely but unadroitly thrown, had lopped off the limbs of one or two of the musnuds as they sat trembling on their omrahs, yet, strange to say, not a single weapon had hurt me. When the hubbub ceased, and the unlucky wretches who had been the victims of this fit of rage had been removed, Holkar’s good-humour somewhat returned, and he allowed me to continue my account of the fort ; which I did, not taking the slightest notice of his burst of impatience, as indeed would have been the height of impolite-

ness to have done, for such accidents happened many times in the day.

'It is well that the Bobbachy has returned,' snuffled out the poor Grand Vizier, after I had explained to the Council the extraordinary means of defence possessed by the garrison. 'Your star is bright, O Bahawder! for this very night we had resolved upon an escalade of the fort, and we had sworn to put every one of the infidel garrison to the edge of the sword.'

'But you have no battering train,' said I.

'Bah! we have a couple of ninety-six pounders, quite sufficient to blow the gates open; and then, hey for a charge!' said Loll Mahommed, a general of cavalry, who was a rival of Bobbachy's, and contradicted, therefore, every word I said. 'In the name of Juggernaut, why wait for the heavy artillery? Have we not swords? Have we not hearts? Mashallah! Let cravens stay with Bobbachy, all true men will follow Loll Mahommed! Allah-humdillah, Bismillah, Barikallah!' <sup>1</sup> and drawing his scimitar, he waved it over his head, and shouted out his cry of battle. It was repeated by many of the other omrahs; the sound of their cheers was carried into the camp, and caught up by the men; the camels began to cry, the horses to prance and neigh, the eight hundred elephants set up a scream, the trumpeters and drummers clanged away at their instruments. I never heard such a din before or after. How I trembled for my little garrison when I heard the enthusiastic cries of this innumerable host!

There was but one way for it. 'Sir,' said I, addressing Holkar, 'go out to-night, and you go to certain death. Loll Mahommed has not seen the fort as I have. Pass the gate if you please, and for what? to fall before the fire of a hundred pieces of artillery; to storm another gate, and then another, and then to be blown up, with Gahagan's garrison, in the citadel. Who talks of courage? Were I not in your august presence, O star of the faithful, I would crop Loll Mahommed's nose from his face, and wear his ears as an ornament in my own pugree! Who is there here that knows not the difference between yonder yellow-skinned coward and Gahagan Khan Guj—I mean Bobbachy Bahawder? I am ready to fight one, two, three, or twenty of them, at broadsword, small-sword, single-stick, with fists, if you please; by the holy piper, fighting is like mate and dthrink to Ga—to Bobbachy, I mane—whoop! come on, you divvle, and I'll bate the skin off your ugly bones.'

<sup>1</sup> The Major has put the most approved language into the mouths of his Indian characters. Bismillah, Barikallah, and so on, according to the novelists, form the very essence of Eastern conversation.

This speech had very nearly proved fatal to me, for, when I am agitated, I involuntarily adopt some of the phraseology peculiar to my own country; which is so uneastern, that, had there been any suspicion as to my real character, detection must indubitably have ensued. As it was, Holkar perceived nothing, but instantaneously stopped the dispute. Loll Mahommed, however, evidently suspected something, for, as Holkar, with a voice of thunder, shouted out, 'Tomasha, silence,' Loll sprang forward and gasped out—

'My lord! my lord! this is not Bob——'

But he could say no more. 'Gag the slave!' screamed out Holkar, stamping with fury; and a turban was instantly twisted round the poor devil's jaws. 'Ho, Furoshes! carry out Loll Mahommed Khan, give him a hundred dozen on the soles of his feet, set him upon a white donkey, and carry him round the camp, with an inscription before him—"This is the way that Holkar rewards the talkative."'

I breathed again; and ever as I heard each whack of the bamboo, falling on Loll Mahommed's feet, I felt peace returning to my mind, and thanked my stars that I was delivered of this danger.

'Vizier,' said Holkar, who enjoyed Loll's roars amazingly, 'I owe you a reparation for your nose: kiss the hand of your prince, O Saadut Allee Beg Bimbukchee! be from this day forth Zoheir u Dowlut!'

The good old man's eyes filled with tears. 'I can bear thy severity, O Prince,' said he; 'I cannot bear thy love. Was it not an honour that your highness did me just now when you condescended to pass over the bridge of your slave's nose?'

The phrase was by all voices pronounced to be very poetical. The Vizier retired, crowned with his new honours, to bed. Holkar was in high good-humour.

'Bobbachy,' said he, 'thou, too, must pardon me; *à propos*—I have news for thee. Your wife, the incomparable Puttee-Rooge (white and red rose), has arrived in camp.'

'My WIFE, my lord!' said I, aghast.

'Our daughter, the light of thine eyes! Go, my son; I see thou art wild with joy. The princess's tents are set up close by mine, and I know thou longest to join her.'

My wife! Here was a complication truly!



## CHAPTER V.

## THE ISSUE OF MY INTERVIEW WITH MY WIFE.

I FOUND Puneeree Muckun, with the rest of my attendants, waiting at the gate, and they immediately conducted me to my own tents in the neighbourhood. I have been in many dangerous predicaments before that time and since, but I don't care to deny that I felt in the present instance such a throbbing of the heart as I never have experienced when leading a forlorn hope, or marching up to a battery.

As soon as I entered the tents a host of menials sprang forward, some to ease me of my armour, some to offer me refreshments, some with hookahs, attar of roses (in great quart bottles), and the thousand delicacies of Eastern life. I motioned them away. 'I will wear my armour,' said I; 'I shall go forth to-night: carry my duty to the princess, and say I grieve that to-night I have not the time to see her. Spread me a couch here, and bring me supper here; a jar of Persian wine well cooled, a lamb stuffed with pistachio-nuts, a pillaw of a couple of turkeys, a curried kid—anything. Begone! Give me a pipe; leave me alone, and tell me when the meal is ready.'

I thought by these means to put off the fair Puttee Rooge, and hoped to be able to escape without subjecting myself to the examination of her curious eyes. After smoking for a while, an attendant came to tell me that my supper was prepared in the inner apartment of the tent (I suppose that the reader, if he be possessed of the commonest intelligence, knows that the tents of the Indian grandees are made of the finest Cashmere shawls, and contain a dozen rooms at least, with carpets, chimneys, and sash-windows complete). I entered, I say, into an inner chamber, and there began with my fingers to devour my meal in the Oriental fashion, taking, every now and then, a pull from the wine-jar which was cooling deliciously in another jar of snow.

I was just in the act of despatching the last morsel of a most savoury stewed lamb and rice, which had formed my meal, when I heard a scuffle of feet, a shrill clatter of female voices, and, the curtain being flung open, in marched a lady accompanied by twelve slaves, with moon faces and slim waists, lovely as the houris in Paradise.

The lady herself, to do her justice, was as great a contrast to her attendants as could possibly be: she was crooked, old, of



the complexion of molasses, and rendered a thousand times more ugly by the tawdry dress and the blazing jewels with which she was covered. A line of yellow chalk drawn from her forehead to the tip of her nose (which was further ornamented by an immense glittering nose-ring), her eyelids painted bright red, and a large dab of the same colour on her chin, showed she was not of the Mussulman, but the Brahmin faith—and of a very high caste; you could see that by her eyes. My mind was instantaneously made up as to my line of action.

The male attendants had of course quitted the apartment, as they heard the well-known sound of her voice. It would have been death to them to have remained and looked in her face. The females ranged themselves round their mistress, as she squatted down opposite to me.

‘And is this,’ said she, ‘a welcome, O Khan! after six months’ absence, for the most unfortunate and loving wife in all the world—is this lamb, O glutton! half so tender as thy spouse? Is this wine, O sot! half so sweet as her looks?’

I saw the storm was brewing—her slaves, to whom she turned, kept up a kind of chorus:—

‘Oh, the faithless one!’ cried they. ‘Oh, the rascal, the false one, who has no eye for beauty, and no heart for love, like the Khanum’s!’

‘A lamb is not so sweet as love,’ said I, gravely; ‘but a lamb has a good temper; a wine-cup is not so intoxicating as a woman—but a wine-cup has *no tongue*, O Khanum Gee!’ and again I dipped my nose in the soul-refreshing jar.

The sweet Puttee Rooge was not, however, to be put off by my repartees; she and her maidens recommenced their chorus, and chattered and stormed until I lost all patience.

‘Retire, friends,’ said I, ‘and leave me in peace.’

‘Stir, on your peril!’ cried the Khanum.

So, seeing there was no help for it but violence, I drew out my pistols, cocked them, and said, ‘O houris! these pistols contain each two balls: the daughter of Holkar bears a sacred life for me—but for you!—by all the saints of Hindoostan, four of ye shall die if ye stay a moment longer in my presence!’ This was enough; the ladies gave a shriek, and scurried out of the apartment like a covey of partridges on the wing.

Now, then, was the time for action. My wife, or rather Bobbachy’s wife, sate still, a little flurried by the unusual ferocity which her lord had displayed in her presence. I seized her hand, and, gripping it close, whispered in her ear, to which I put the other pistol, ‘O Khanum, listen and scream not; the moment you

scream, you die !' She was completely beaten : she turned as pale as a woman could in her situation, and said, 'Speak, Bobbachy Bahawder, I am dumb.'

'Woman,' said I, taking off my helmet, and removing the chain cape which had covered almost the whole of my face—'*I am not thy husband*—I am the slayer of elephants, the world-renowned GAHAGAN !'

As I said this, and as the long ringlets of red hair fell over my shoulders (contrasting strangely with my dyed face and beard), I formed one of the finest pictures that can possibly be conceived, and I recommend it as a subject to Mr. Heath, for the next 'Book of Beauty.'

'Wretch !' said she, 'what wouldst thou ?'

'You black-faced fiend,' said I, 'raise but your voice, and you are dead !'

'And afterwards,' said she, 'do you suppose that *you* can escape ? The torments of hell are not so terrible as the tortures that Holkar will invent for thee.'

'Tortures, madam,' answered I, coolly, 'fiddlesticks ! You will neither betray me, nor will I be put to the torture : on the contrary, you will give me your best jewels and facilitate my escape to the fort. Don't grind your teeth and swear at me. Listen, madam ; you know this dress and these arms, they are the arms of your husband, Bobbachy Bahawder—*my prisoner*. He now lies in yonder fort, and, if I do not return before daylight, *at sunrise he dies* : and then, when they send his corpse back to Holkar, what will you, *his widow*, do ?'

'Oh !' said she, shuddering, 'spare me, spare me !'

'I'll tell you what you will do. You will have the pleasure of dying along with him—of *being roasted*, madam,—an agonising death, from which your father cannot save you, to which he will be the first man to condemn and conduct you. Ha ! I see we understand each other, and you will give me over the cash-box and jewels.' And so saying, I threw myself back with the calmest air imaginable, flinging the pistols over to her. 'Light me a pipe, my love,' said I, 'and then go and hand me over the dollars ; do you hear ?' You see I had her in my power—up a tree, as the Americans say,—and she very humbly lighted my pipe for me, and then departed for the goods I spoke about.

What a thing is luck ! If Loll Mahommed had not been made to take that ride round the camp, I should infallibly have been lost.

My supper, my quarrel with the princess, and my pipe afterwards had occupied a couple of hours of my time. The princess

returned from her quest, and brought with her the box, containing valuables to the amount of about three millions sterling. (I was cheated of them afterwards, but have the box still, a plain deal one.) I was just about to take my departure, when a tremendous knocking, shouting, and screaming was heard at the entrance of the tent. It was Holkar himself, accompanied by that cursed Loll Mahommed, who, after his punishment, found his master restored to good-humour, and had communicated to him his firm conviction that I was an impostor.

'Ho, Begum!' shouted he, in the anteroom (for he and his people could not enter the women's apartments), 'speak, O my daughter! is your husband returned?'

'Speak, madam,' said I, 'or *remember the roasting*.'

'He is, papa,' said the Begum.

'Are you sure? Ho! ho! ho!' (the old ruffian was laughing outside)—'are you sure it is?—Ha! ha! ha!—*he-e-e!*'

'Indeed it is he, and no other. I pray you, father, to go, and to pass no more such shameless jests on your daughter. Have I ever seen the face of any other man?' And hereat she began to weep as if her heart would break—the deceitful minx!

Holkar's laugh was instantly turned to fury. 'Oh, you liar and eternal thief!' said he, turning round (as I presume, for I could only hear) to Loll Mahommed, 'to make your prince eat such monstrous dirt as this! Furoshes, seize this man. I dismiss him from my service, I degrade him from his rank, I appropriate to myself all his property; and, hark ye, Furoshes, GIVE HIM A HUNDRED DOZEN MORE!'

Again I heard the whacks of the bamboos, and peace flowed into my soul.

Just as morn began to break, two figures were seen to approach the little fortress of Futtighur; one was a woman wrapped closely in a veil, the other a warrior, remarkable for the size and manly beauty of his form, who carried in his hand a deal box of considerable size. The warrior at the gate gave the word and was admitted; the woman returned slowly to the Indian camp. Her name was Puttee Rooge; his was—

G. O'G. G., M.H.E.I.C.S.C.I.H.A.



## CHAPTER VI.

## FAMINE IN THE GARRISON.

THUS my dangers for the night being overcome, I hastened with my precious box into my own apartment, which communicated with another, where I had left my prisoner, with a guard to report if he should recover, and to prevent his escape. My servant, Ghorumsaug, was one of the guard. I called him and the fellow came, looking very much confused and frightened, as it seemed, at my appearance.

‘Why, Ghorumsaug,’ said I, ‘what makes thee look so pale, fellow?’ (He was as white as a sheet.) ‘It is thy master, dost thou not remember him?’ The man had seen me dress myself in the Pitan’s clothes, but was not present when I had blacked my face and beard in the manner I have described.

‘O Bramah, Vishnou, and Mahomet!’ cried the faithful fellow, ‘and do I see my dear master disguised in this way? For Heaven’s sake let me rid you of this odious black paint; for what will the ladies say in the ballroom, if the beautiful Feringhee should appear amongst them with his roses turned into coal?’

I am still one of the finest men in Europe, and at the time of which I write, when only two-and-twenty, I confess I *was* a little vain of my personal appearance, and not very willing to appear before my dear Belinda disguised like a blackamoor. I allowed Ghorumsaug to divest me of the heathenish armour and habiliments which I wore; and having, with a world of scrubbing and trouble, divested my face and beard of their black tinge, I put on my own becoming uniform, and hastened to wait on the ladies; hastened, I say,—although delayed would have been the better word, for the operation of bleaching lasted at least two hours.

‘How is the prisoner, Ghorumsaug?’ said I, before leaving my apartment.

‘He has recovered from the blow which the Lion dealt him: two men and myself watch over him; and Macgillicuddy Sahib (the second in command) has just been the rounds, and has seen that all was secure.’

I bade Ghorumsaug help me to put away my chest of treasure (my exultation in taking it was so great that I could not help informing him of its contents); and this done, I despatched him to his post near the prisoner, while I prepared to sally forth and pay my respects to the fair creatures under my protection. ‘What

good after all have I done,' thought I to myself, 'in this expedition which I had so rashly undertaken?' I had seen the renowned Holkar, I had been in the heart of his camp; I knew the disposition of his troops, that there were eleven thousand of them, and that he only waited for his guns to make a regular attack on the fort. I had seen Putty Rooge; I had robbed her (I say *robbed* her, and I don't care what the reader or any other man may think of the act) of a deal box, containing jewels to the amount of three millions sterling, the property of herself and husband.

Three millions in money and jewels! And what the deuce were money and jewels to me and to my poor garrison? Could my adorable Miss Bulcher eat a fricassee of diamonds, or, Cleopatra-like, melt down pearls to her tea? Could I, careless as I am about food, with a stomach that would digest anything—(once, in Spain, I ate the leg of a horse during a famine, and was so eager to swallow this morsel that I bolted the shoe, as well as the hoof, and never felt the slightest inconvenience from either)—could I, I say, expect to live long and well upon a ragoût of rupees, or a dish of stewed emeralds and rubies? With all the wealth of Cræsus before me I felt melancholy; and would have paid cheerfully its weight in carats for a good honest round of boiled beef. Wealth, wealth, what art thou? What is gold?—Soft metal. What are diamonds?—Shining tinsel. The great wealth-winners, the only fame-achievers, the sole objects worthy of a soldier's consideration, are beef-steaks, gunpowder, and cold iron.

The two latter means of competency we possessed; I had in my own apartments a small store of gunpowder (keeping it under my own bed, with a candle burning for fear of accidents); I had 14 pieces of artillery (4 long 48's and 4 carronades, 5 howitzers, and a long brass mortar, for grape, which I had taken myself at the battle of Assye), and muskets for ten times my force. My garrison, as I have told the reader in a previous number, consisted of 40 men, two chaplains, and a surgeon; add to these my guests, 83 in number, of whom nine only were gentlemen (in tights, powder, pigtails, and silk stockings, who had come out merely for a dance, and found themselves in for a siege). Such were our numbers:—

Troops and artillerymen	.	.	.	40
Ladies	.	.	.	74
Other non-combatants.	.	.	.	11
MAJOR G. O'G. GAHAGAN	.	.	.	1000

I count myself good for a thousand, for so I was regularly rated in the army : with this great benefit to it, that I only consumed as much as an ordinary mortal. We were then, as far as the victuals went, 126 mouths ; as combatants we numbered 1040 gallant men, with 12 guns and a fort, against Holkar and his 12,000. No such alarming odds, if——

*If!*—ay, there was the rub—*if* we had *shot*, as well as powder, for our guns ; *if* we had not only *men* but *meat*. Of the former commodity we had only three rounds for each piece. Of the latter, upon my sacred honour, to feed 126 souls, we had but

Two drumsticks of fowls, and a bone of ham

Fourteen bottles of ginger-beer.

Of soda-water, four do. do.

Two bottles fine Spanish olives.

Raspberry cream—the remainder of two dishes.

Seven macaroons lying in the puddle of a demolished trifle.

Half a drum of best Turkey figs.

Some bits of broken bread ; two Dutch cheeses (whole) ; the crust of an old Stilton ; and about an ounce of almonds and raisins.

Three ham-sandwiches, and a pot of currant-jelly, and 197 bottles of brandy, rum, madeira, pale ale (my private stock) ; a couple of hard eggs for a salad, and a flask of Florence oil.

This was the provision for the whole garrison ! The men after supper had seized upon the relics of the repast, as they were carried off from the table ; and these were the miserable remnants I found and counted on my return : taking good care to lock the door of the supper-room, and treasure what little sustenance still remained in it.

When I appeared in the saloon, now lighted up by the morning sun, I not only caused a sensation myself, but felt one in my own bosom, which was of the most painful description. O my reader ! may you never behold such a sight as that which presented itself : eighty-three men and women in ball-dresses ; the former with their lank powdered locks streaming over their faces ; the latter with faded flowers, uncurled wigs, smudged rouge, bleared eyes, dragging feathers, rumpled satins—each more desperately melancholy and hideous than the other—each, except my beloved Belinda Bulcher, whose raven ringlets never having been in curl, could of course never go *out* of curl ; whose cheek, pale as the lily, could, as it may naturally be supposed, grow no paler ; whose neck and

beauteous arms, dazzling as alabaster, needed no pearl-powder, and therefore, as I need not state, did not suffer because the pearl-powder had come off. Joy (deft link-boy !) lit his lamps in each of her eyes as I entered. As if I had been her sun, her spring, lo ! blushing roses mantled in her cheek ! Seventy-three ladies, as I entered, opened their fire upon me, and stunned me with cross-questions regarding my adventures in the camp—*she*, as she saw me, gave a faint scream (the sweetest, sure, that ever gurgled through the throat of a woman !), then started up—then made as if she would sit down—then moved backwards—then tottered forwards—then tumbled into my—Psha ! why recall, why attempt to describe that delicious—that passionate greeting of two young hearts ? What was the surrounding crowd to *us* ? What cared we for the sneers of the men, the titters of the jealous women, the shrill ‘Upon my word !’ of the elder Miss Bulcher, and the loud expostulations of Belinda’s mamma ? The brave girl loved me, and wept in my arms. ‘Goliah ! my Goliah !’ said she, ‘my brave, my beautiful, *thou* art returned, and hope comes back with thee. Oh ! who can tell the anguish of my soul, during this dreadful, dreadful night !’ Other similar ejaculations of love and joy she uttered ; and if I *had* perilled life in her service, if I *did* believe that hope of escape there was none, so exquisite was the moment of our meeting, that I forgot all else in this overwhelming joy !

[The major’s description of this meeting, which lasted at the very most not ten seconds, occupies thirteen pages of writing. We have been compelled to dock off twelve and a-half ; for the whole passage, though highly creditable to his feelings, might possibly be tedious to the reader.]

As I said, the ladies and gentlemen were inclined to sneer, and were giggling audibly. I led the dear girl to a chair, and, scowling round with a tremendous fierceness, which those who know me know I can sometimes put on, I shouted out, ‘Hark ye ! men and women—I am this lady’s truest knight—her husband I hope one day to be. I am commander, too, in this fort—the enemy is without it ; another word of mockery—another glance of scorn—and, by Heaven, I will hurl every man and woman from the battlements, a prey to the ruffianly Holkar !’ This quieted them. I am a man of my word, and none of them stirred or looked disrespectfully from that moment.

It was now *my* turn to make *them* look foolish. Mrs. Vandegobbleschroy (whose unfailing appetite is pretty well known to

every person who has been in India) cried, 'Well, Captain Gahagan, your ball has been so pleasant, and the supper was despatched so long ago, that myself and the ladies would be very glad of a little breakfast.' And Mrs. Van. giggled as if she had made a very witty and reasonable speech. 'Oh! breakfast, breakfast, by all means,' said the rest; 'we really are dying for a warm cup of tea.'

'Is it bohay tay or souchong tay that you'd like, ladies! says I.

'Nonsense, you silly man; any tea you like,' said fat Mrs. Van.

'What do you say, then, to some prime GUNPOWDER?' Of course they said it was the very thing.

'And do you like hot rowls or cowl'd—muffins or crumpets—fresh butter or salt? And you, gentlemen, what do you say to some ilegant divvled-kidneys for yourselves, and just a trifle of grilled turkeys, and a couple of hundthred new-laid eggs for the ladies?'

'Pooh, pooh! be it as you will, my dear fellow,' answered they all.

'But stop,' says I. 'O ladies, O ladies; O gentlemen, gentlemen, that you should ever have come to the quarters of Goliah Gahagan, and he been without——'

'What?' said they, in a breath.

'Alas! alas! I have not got a single stick of chocolate in the whole house.'

'Well, well, we can do without it.'

'Or a single pound of coffee.'

'Never mind; let that pass too.' (Mrs. Van. and the rest were beginning to look alarmed.)

'And about the kidneys—now I remember, the black divvles outside the fort have seized upon all the sheep; and how are we to have kidneys without them?' (Here there was a slight o—o—o!)

'And with regard to the milk and crame, it may be remarked that the cows are likewise in pawn, and not a single drop can be had for money or love: but we can beat up eggs, you know, in the tay, which will be just as good.'

'Oh, just as good.'

'Only the divvle's in the luck, there's not a fresh egg to be had—no, nor a fresh chicken,' continued I, 'nor a stale one either; nor a tayspoonful of souchong, nor a thimbleful of bohay; nor the laste taste in life of butter, salt or fresh; nor hot rowls or cowl'd!'

'In the name of Heaven!' said Mrs. Van., growing very pale, 'what is there, then?'



‘Ladies and gentlemen, I’ll tell you what there is, now,’ shouted I. ‘There’s

‘Two drumsticks of fowls, and a bone of ham,  
Fourteen bottles of ginger-beer,’ etc. etc. etc.

And I went through the whole list of eatables as before, ending with the ham-sandwiches and the pot of jelly.

‘Law! Mr. Gahagan,’ said Mrs. Colonel Vandegobbleschroy, ‘give me the ham-sandwiches, I must manage to breakfast off them.’

And you should have heard the pretty to-do there was at this modest proposition! Of course I did not accede to it—why should I? I was the commander of the fort, and intended to keep these three very sandwiches for the use of myself and my dear Belinda. ‘Ladies,’ said I, ‘there are in this fort one hundred and twenty-six souls, and this is all the food which is to last us during the siege. Meat there is none—of drink there is a tolerable quantity; and, at one o’clock punctually, a glass of wine and one olive shall be served out to each woman: the men will receive two glasses, and an olive and a fig—and this must be your food during the siege. Lord Lake cannot be absent more than three days; and, if he be, why, still there is a chance—why do I say a chance?—a *certainty* of escaping from the hands of these ruffians.’

‘Oh, name it, name it, dear Captain Gahagan!’ screeched the whole covey at a breath.

‘It lies,’ answered I, ‘in the *powder magazine*. I will blow this fort, and all it contains, to atoms, ere it becomes the prey of Holkar.’

The women, at this, raised a squeal that might have been heard in Holkar’s camp, and fainted in different directions; but my dear Belinda whispered in my ear, ‘Well done, thou noble knight! bravely said, my heart’s Goliath!’ I felt I was right: I could have blown her up twenty times for the luxury of that single moment! ‘And now, ladies,’ said I, ‘I must leave you. The two chaplains will remain with you to administer professional consolation—the other gentlemen will follow me upstairs to the ramparts where I shall find plenty of work for them.’

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE ESCAPE.

LOTH as they were, these gentlemen had nothing for it but to obey, and they accordingly followed me to the ramparts, where I proceeded to review my men. The fort, in my absence, had been left in command of Lieutenant Macgillicuddy, a countryman of my own (with whom, as may be seen in an early chapter of my memoirs, I had an affair of honour); and the prisoner Bobbachy Bahawder, whom I had only stunned, never wishing to kill him, had been left in charge of that officer. Three of the garrison (one of them a man of the Ahmednuggar Irregulars, my own body-servant, Ghorumsaug above-named) were appointed to watch the captive by turns, and never leave him out of their sight. The lieutenant was instructed to look to them and to their prisoner, and as Bobbachy was severely injured by the blow which I had given him, and was, moreover, bound hand and foot, and gagged smartly with cords, I considered myself sure of his person.

Macgillicuddy did not make his appearance when I reviewed my little force, and the three havildars were likewise absent—this did not surprise me, as I had told them not to leave their prisoner; but, desirous to speak with the lieutenant, I despatched a messenger to him, and ordered him to appear immediately.

The messenger came back—he was looking ghastly pale: he whispered some information into my ear, which instantly caused me to hasten to the apartments where I had caused Bobbachy Bahawder to be confined.

The men had fled!—Bobbachy had fled; and in his place, fancy my astonishment when I found—with a rope cutting his naturally wide mouth almost into his ears—with a dreadful sabre-cut across his forehead—with his legs tied over his head, and his arms tied between his legs—my unhappy, my attached friend—Mortimer Macgillicuddy!

He had been in this position for about three hours—it was the very position in which I had caused Bobbachy Bahawder to be placed—an attitude uncomfortable, it is true, but one which renders escape impossible, unless treason aid the prisoner.

I restored the lieutenant to his natural erect position: I poured half a bottle of whisky down the immensely enlarged orifice of his mouth; and when he had been released, he informed me of the circumstances that had taken place.

Fool that I was ! idiot !—upon my return to the fort, to have been anxious about my personal appearance, and to have spent a couple of hours in removing the artificial blackening from my beard and complexion, instead of going to examine my prisoner : when his escape would have been prevented. O foppery, foppery !—it was that cursed love of personal appearance which had led me to forget my duty to my general, my country, my monarch, and my own honour !

Thus it was that the escape took place. My own fellow of the Irregulars, whom I had summoned to dress me, performed the operation to my satisfaction, invested me with the elegant uniform of my corps, and removed the Pitan's disguise which I had taken from the back of the prostrate Bobbachy Bahawder. What did the rogue do next?—Why, he carried back the dress to the Bobbachy—he put it, once more, on his right owner : he and his infernal black companions (who had been so won over by the Bobbachy, with promises of enormous reward) gagged Macgillicuddy, who was going the rounds, and then marched with the Indian coolly up to the outer gate, and gave the word. The sentinel, thinking it was myself, who had first come in, and was as likely to go out again—(indeed, my rascally black valet said that Gahagan Sahib was about to go out with him and his two companions to reconnoitre)—opened the gates, and off they went !

This accounted for the confusion of my valet when I entered !—and for the scoundrel's speech, that the lieutenant had *just been the rounds* ;—he *had*, poor fellow, and had been seized and bound in this cruel way. The three men, with their liberated prisoner, had just been on the point of escape, when my arrival disconcerted them : I had changed the guard at the gate (whom they had won over likewise) ; and yet, although they had overcome poor Mac, and although they were ready for the start, they had positively no means for effecting their escape, until I was ass enough to put means in their way. Fool ! fool ! thrice-besotted fool that I was, to think of my own silly person when I should have been occupied solely with my public duty.

From Macgillicuddy's incoherent accounts, as he was gasping from the effects of the gag, and the whisky he had taken to revive him, and from my own subsequent observations, I learned this sad story. A sudden and painful thought struck me—my precious box !—I rushed back, I found the box—I have it still—opening it, there where I had left ingots, sacks of bright tomauns, kopeks, and rupees, strings of diamonds as big as duck's eggs, rubies as red as the lips of my Belinda, countless strings of pearls, amethysts, emeralds, piles upon piles of bank-notes—I found—a piece of paper !

with a few lines in the Sanscrit language, which are thus, word for word, translated :—

‘EPIGRAM

(*On disappointing a certain Major.*)

‘The conquering lion return’d with his prey  
And safe in his cavern he set it ;  
The sly little fox stole the booty away,  
And, as he escaped, to the lion did say,  
‘*Aha!* don’t you wish you may get it?’

Confusion! Oh, how my blood boiled as I read these cutting lines! I stamped,—I swore,—I don’t know to what insane lengths my rage might have carried me, had not at this moment a soldier rushed in, screaming, ‘The enemy, the enemy!’

## CHAPTER VIII.

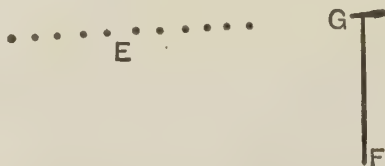
### THE CAPTIVE.

It was high time, indeed, that I should make my appearance. Waving my sword with one hand, and seizing my telescope with the other, I at once frightened and examined the enemy. Well they knew when they saw that flamingo-plume floating in the breeze—that awful figure standing in the breach—that waving war-sword sparkling in the sky—well, I say, they knew the name of the humble individual who owned the sword, the plume, and the figure. The ruffians were mustered in front, the cavalry behind. The flags were flying, the drums, gongs, tambourines, violoncellos, and other instruments of Eastern music, raised in the air a strange barbaric melody; the officers (*yatabals*), mounted on white dromedaries, were seen galloping to and fro, carrying to the advancing hosts the orders of Holkar.

You see that two sides of the fort of Futtyghur (rising as it does on a rock that is almost perpendicular) are defended by the Burrumpooter river, two hundred feet deep at this point, and a thousand yards wide, so that I had no fear about them attacking me in *that* quarter. My guns, therefore (with their six-and-thirty miserable charges of shot), were dragged round to the point at which I conceived Holkar would be most likely to attack me. I was in a situation that I did not dare to fire, except at such times as I could kill a hundred men by a single discharge of a cannon; so the

attacking party marched and marched, very strongly, about a mile and a-half off, the elephants marching without receiving the slightest damage from us, until they had come to within four hundred yards of our walls (the rogues knew all the secrets of our weakness, through the betrayal of the dastardly Ghorumsaug, or they never would have ventured so near). At that distance—it was about the spot where the Futttyghur hill began gradually to rise—the invading force stopped; the elephants drew up in a line, right angles with our wall (the fools! they thought they should expose themselves too much by taking a position parallel to it!); the cavalry halted too, and—after the deuce's own flourish of trumpets, and banging of gongs, to be sure—somebody, in a flame-coloured satin dress, with an immense jewel blazing in his pugree (that looked through my telescope like a small but very bright planet), got up from the back of one of the very biggest elephants, and began a speech.

The elephants were, as I said, in a line formed with admirable precision, about three hundred of them. The following little diagram will explain matters :—



E is the line of elephants. F is the wall of the fort. G a gun in the fort. *Now* the reader will see what I did.

The elephants were standing, their trunks wagging to and fro gracefully before them; and I, with superhuman skill and activity, brought the gun G (a devilish long brass gun) to bear upon them. I pointed it myself; bang it went, and what was the consequence? Why, this :—



F is the fort, as before. G is the gun, as before. E the elephants, as we have previously seen them. What then is  $\times$ ?  $\times$  is the



*line taken by the ball fired from G, which took off one hundred and thirty-four elephants' trunks, and only spent itself in the tusk of a very old animal, that stood the hundred and thirty-fifth!*

I say that such a shot was never fired before or since; that a gun was never pointed in such a way. Suppose I had been a common man, and contented myself with firing bang at the head of the first animal? An ass would have done it, prided himself had he hit his mark,—and what would have been the consequence? Why, that the ball might have killed two elephants and wounded a third; but here, probably, it would have stopped, and done no further mischief. The *trunk* was the place at which to aim; there are no bones there; and away, consequently, went the bullet, shearing, as I have said, through one hundred and thirty-five probosces. Heavens! what a howl there was when the shot took effect! What a sudden stoppage of Holkar's speech! What a hideous snorting of elephants! What a rush backwards was made by the whole army, as if some demon was pursuing them!

Away they went. No sooner did I see them in full retreat, than, rushing forward myself, I shouted to my men, 'My friends, yonder lies your dinner!' We flung open the gates—we tore down to the spot where the elephants had fallen; seven of them were killed; and of those that escaped to die of their hideous wounds elsewhere, most had left their trunks behind them. A great quantity of them we seized: and I myself, cutting up with my scimitar a couple of the fallen animals, as a butcher would a calf, motioned to the men to take the pieces back to the fort, where barbecued elephant was served round for dinner, instead of the miserable allowance of an olive and a glass of wine, which I had promised to my female friends in my speech to them. The animal reserved for the ladies was a young white one—the fattest and tenderest I ever ate in my life: they are very fair eating, but the flesh has an India-rubber flavour, which, until one is accustomed to it, is unpalatable.

It was well that I had obtained this supply, for, during my absence on the works, Mrs. Vandegobbleschroy, and one or two others, had forced their way into the supper-room, and devoured every morsel of the garrison larder, with the exception of the cheeses, the olives, and the wine, which was locked up in my own apartment, before which stood a sentinel. Disgusting Mrs. Van.! When I heard of her gluttony, I had almost a mind to eat *her*. However, we made a very comfortable dinner off the barbecued steaks, and when everybody had done, had the comfort of knowing that there was enough for one meal more.

The next day, as I expected, the enemy attacked us in great

force, attempting to escalate the fort ; but by the help of my guns, and my good sword, by the distinguished bravery of Lieutenant Macgillicuddy and the rest of the garrison, we beat this attack off completely, the enemy sustaining a loss of seven hundred men. We were victorious ; but when another attack was made, what were we to do ? We had still a little powder left, but had fired off all the shot, stones, iron bars, etc., in the garrison ! On this day, too, we devoured the last morsel of our food. I shall never forget Mrs. Vandegobbleschroy's despairing look, as I saw her sitting alone, attempting to make some impression on the little white elephant's roasted tail.

The third day the attack was repeated. The resources of genius are never at an end. Yesterday, I had no ammunition ; to-day, I had discovered charges sufficient for two guns, and two swivels, which were much longer, but had bores of about blunderbuss size.

This time my friend Loll Mahommed, who had received, as the reader may remember, such a bastinadoing for my sake, headed the attack. The poor wretch could not walk, but he was carried in an open palanquin, and came on waving his sword, and cursing horribly in his Hindoostan jargon. Behind him came troops of matchlockmen, who picked off every one of our men who showed their noses above the ramparts ; and a great host of blackamoors with scaling-ladders, bundles to fill the ditch, fascines, gabions, culverins, demilunes, counterscarps, and all the other appurtenances of offensive war.

On they came ; my guns and men were ready for them. You will ask how my pieces were loaded ? I answer, that though my garrison were without food, I knew my duty as an officer, and *had put the two Dutch cheeses into the two guns, and had crammed the contents of a bottle of olives into each swivel.*

They advanced,—whish ! went one of the Dutch cheeses,—bang ! went the other. Alas ! they did little execution. In their first contact with an opposing body, they certainly floored it ; but they became at once like so much Welsh-rabbit, and did no execution beyond the man whom they struck down.

'Hogree, pogree, wongree-fum' (praise to Allah, and the forty-nine Imaums !), shouted out the ferocious Loll Mahommed, when he saw the failure of my shot. 'Onward, sons of the Prophet ! the infidel has no more ammunition. A hundred thousand lakhs of rupees to the man who brings me Gahagan's head !'

His men set up a shout, and rushed forward—he, to do him justice, was at the very head, urging on his own palanquin-bearers, and poking them with the tip of his scimitar. They came panting up the hill : I was black with rage, but it was the cold, con-

centrated rage of despair. 'Macgillieuddy,' said I, calling that faithful officer, 'you know where the barrels of powder are?' He did. 'You know the use to make of them?' He did. He grasped my hand. 'Goliah,' said he, 'farewell! I swear that the fort shall be in atoms as soon as yonder unbelievers have carried it. Oh, my poor mother!' added the gallant youth, as sighing, yet fearless, he retired to his post.

I gave one thought to my blessed, my beautiful Belinda, and then, stepping into the front, took down one of the swivels;—a shower of matchlock balls came whizzing round my head. I did not heed them.

I took the swivel, and aimed coolly. Loll Mahommed, his palanquin, and his men, were now not above two hundred yards from the fort. Loll was straight before me, gesticulating and shouting to his men. I fired—Bang!!!

I aimed so true, that *one hundred and seventeen best Spanish olives were lodged in a lump in the face of the unhappy Loll Mahommed*. The wretch, uttering a yell the most hideous and unearthly I ever heard, fell back dead—the frightened bearers flung down the palanquin and ran—the whole host ran as one man; their screams might be heard for leagues. 'Tomasha, tomasha,' they cried, 'it is enchantment!' Away they fled, and the victory a third time was ours. Soon as the fight was done, I flew back to my Belinda—we had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, but I forgot hunger in the thought of once more beholding *her!*

The sweet soul turned towards me with a sickly smile as I entered, and almost fainted in my arms; but, alas! it was not love which caused in her bosom an emotion so strong—it was hunger! 'Oh! my Goliah,' whispered she, 'for three days I have not tasted food—I could not eat that horrid elephant yesterday; but now—oh! Heaven!' She could say no more, but sank almost lifeless on my shoulder. I administered to her a trifling dram of rum, which revived her for a moment, and then rushed downstairs, determined that if it were a piece of my own leg, she should still have something to satisfy her hunger. Luckily, I remembered that three or four elephants were still lying in the field, having been killed by us in the first action, two days before. Necessity, thought I, has no law; my adorable girl must eat elephant, until she can get something better.

I rushed into the court where the men were, for the most part, assembled. 'Men,' said I, 'our larder is empty; we must fill it as we did the day before yesterday. Who will follow Gahagan on a foraging party?' I expected that, as on former occasions, every man would offer to accompany me.

To my astonishment, not a soul moved—a murmur arose among the troops; and at last, one of the oldest and bravest came forward.

‘Captain,’ he said, ‘it is of no use; we cannot feed upon elephants for ever; we have not a grain of powder left, and must give up the fort when the attack is made to-morrow. We may as well be prisoners now as then, and we won’t go elephant-hunting any more.’

‘Ruffian!’ I said, ‘he who first talks of surrender, dies!’ and I cut him down. ‘Is there any one else who wishes to speak?’

No one stirred.

‘Cowards! miserable cowards!’ shouted I; ‘what, you dare not move for fear of death, at the hands of those wretches who even now fled before your arms—what, do I say *your* arms?—before *mine*!—alone I did it; and as alone I routed the foe, alone I will victual the fortress! Ho! open the gate!’

I rushed out; not a single man would follow. The bodies of the elephants that we had killed still lay on the ground where they had fallen, about four hundred yards from the fort. I descended calmly the hill, a very steep one, and coming to the spot, took my pick of the animals, choosing a tolerably small and plump one, of about thirteen feet high, which the vultures had respected. I threw this animal over my shoulders, and made for the fort.

As I marched up the acclivity, whizz—piff—whirr! came the balls over my head; and pitter-patter, pitter-patter! they fell on the body of the elephant like drops of rain. The enemy were behind me; I knew it, and quickened my pace. I heard the gallop of their horse: they came nearer, nearer; I was within a hundred yards of the fort—seventy—fifty! I strained every nerve; I panted with the superhuman exertion—I ran,—could a man run very fast with such a tremendous weight on his shoulders?

Up came the enemy; fifty horsemen were shouting and screaming at my tail. Oh, Heaven! five yards more—one moment—and I am saved. It is done—I strain the last strain—I make the last step—I fling forward my precious burden into the gate opened wide to receive me and it, and—I fall! The gate thunders to, and I am left *on the outside*! Fifty knives are gleaming before my bloodshot eyes—fifty black hands are at my throat, when a voice exclaims, ‘Stop!—kill him not, it is Gujputi!’ A film came over my eyes—exhausted nature would bear no more.

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## CHAPTER IX.

## SURPRISE OF FUTTYGHUR.

WHEN I awoke from the trance into which I had fallen, I found myself in a bath, surrounded by innumerable black faces; and a Hindoo pothukoor (whence our word apothecary) feeling my pulse, and looking at me with an air of sagacity.

‘Where am I?’ I exclaimed, looking round and examining the strange faces, and the strange apartment which met my view. ‘Bekhusm!’ said the apothecary. ‘Silence! Gahagan Saib is in the hands of those who know his valour, and will save his life.’

‘Know my valour, slave? Of course you do,’ said I; ‘but the fort—the garrison—the elephant—Belinda, my love—my darling—Macgillicuddy—the scoundrelly mutineers—the deal bo——’ . . .

I could say no more: the painful recollections pressed so heavily upon my poor shattered mind and frame, that both failed once more. I fainted again, and I know not how long I lay insensible.

Again, however, I came to my senses; the pothukoor applied restoratives, and after a slumber of some hours, I awoke, much refreshed. I had no wound; my repeated swoons had been brought on (as indeed well they might) by my gigantic efforts in carrying the elephant up a steep hill a quarter of a mile in length. Walking, the task is bad enough, but running, it is the deuce; and I would recommend any of my readers who may be disposed to try and carry a dead elephant, never, on any account, to go a pace of more than five miles an hour.

Scarcely was I awake, when I heard the clash of arms at my door (plainly indicating that sentinels were posted there), and a single old gentleman, richly habited, entered the room. Did my eyes deceive me? I had surely seen him before. No—yes—no—yes—it *was* he; the snowy white beard, the mild eyes, the nose flattened to a jelly, and level with the rest of the venerable face, proclaimed him at once to be—Saadut Allee Beg Bimbukchee, Holkar’s Prime Vizier, whose nose, as the reader may recollect, his Highness had flattened with his kaleawn, during my interview with him in the Pitan’s disguise.—I now knew my fate but too well—I was in the hands of Holkar.

Saadut Allee Beg Bimbukchee slowly advanced towards me, and with a mild air of benevolence, which distinguished that excellent man (he was torn to pieces by wild horses the year after, on account of a difference with Holkar), he came to my bedside, and, taking



gently my hand, said, 'Life and death, my son, are not ours. Strength is deceitful, valour is unavailing, fame is only wind—the nightingale sings of the rose all night—where is the rose in the morning? Booch, booch! it is withered by a frost. The rose makes remarks regarding the nightingale, and where is that delightful song-bird? Pena-bekhoda, he is netted, plucked, spitted, and roasted! Who knows how misfortune comes? It has come to Gahagan Gujputi!'

'It is well,' said I, stoutly, and in the Malay language. 'Gahagan Gujputi will bear it like a man.'

'No doubt—like a wise man and a brave one; but there is no lane so long to which there is not a turning, no night so black to which there comes not a morning. Icy winter is followed by merry springtime—grief is often succeeded by joy.'

'Interpret, O riddler!' said I; 'Gahagan Khan is no reader of puzzles—no prating Mollah. Gujputi loves not words, but swords.'

'Listen then, O Gujputi; you are in Holkar's power.'

'I know it.'

'You will die by the most horrible tortures to-morrow morning.'

'I dare say.'

'They will tear your teeth from your jaws, your nails from your fingers, and your eyes from your head.'

'Very possibly.'

'They will flay you alive, and then burn you.'

'Well; they can't do any more.'

'They will seize upon every man and woman in yonder fort'—it was not then taken!—'and repeat upon them the same tortures.'

'Ha! Belinda! Speak—how can all this be avoided?'

'Listen. Gahagan loves the moon-face, called Belinda.'

'He does, Vizier, to distraction.'

'Of what rank is he in the Koompani's army?'

'A captain.'

'A miserable captain—oh, shame! Of what creed is he?'

'I am an Irishman, and a Catholic.'

'But he has not been very particular about his religious duties?'

'Alas, no!'

'He has not been to his mosque for these twelve years?'

'Tis too true.'

'Hearken, now, Gahagan Khan. His Highness Prince Holkar has sent me to thee. You shall have the moon-face for your wife—your second wife, that is;—the first shall be the incomparable Puttee Rooge, who loves you to madness; with Puttee Rooge, who

is the wife, you shall have the wealth and rank of Bobbachy Bahawder, of whom his Highness intends to get rid. You shall be second in command of his Highness's forces. Look, here is his commission signed with the celestial seal, and attested by the sacred names of the forty-nine Imaums. You have but to renounce your religion, and your service, and all these rewards are yours.'

He produced a parchment, signed as he said, and gave it to me (it was beautifully written in Indian ink—I had it for fourteen years, but a rascally valet, seeing it very dirty, *washed* it, forsooth, and washed off every bit of the writing)—I took it calmly, and said, 'This is a tempting offer; O Vizier, how long wilt thou give me to consider of it?'

After a long parley, he allowed me six hours, when I promised to give him an answer. My mind, however, was made up—as soon as he was gone, I threw myself on the sofa and fell asleep.

At the end of the six hours the Vizier came back: two people were with him; one, by his martial appearance, I knew to be Holkar, the other I did not recognise. It was about midnight.

'Have you considered?' said the Vizier, as he came to my couch.

'I have,' said I, sitting up,—I could not stand, for my legs were tied, and my arms fixed in a neat pair of steel handcuffs. 'I have,' said I, 'unbelieving dogs! I have. Do you think to pervert a Christian gentleman from his faith and honour? Ruffian blackamoors! do your worst; heap tortures on this body, they cannot last long—tear me to pieces—after you have torn me into a certain number of pieces, I shall not feel it—and if I did, if each torture could last a life—if each limb were to feel the agonies of a whole body, what then? I would bear all—all—all—all—all—ALL!' My breast heaved—my form dilated—my eye flashed as I spoke these words. 'Tyrants!' said I, '*dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*' Having thus clinched the argument, I was silent.

The venerable Grand Vizier turned away; I saw a tear trickling down his cheeks.

'What a constancy!' said he; 'oh, that such beauty and such bravery should be doomed so soon to quit the earth!'

His tall companion only sneered and said, '*And Belinda*——?'

'Ha!' said I; 'ruffian, be still!—Heaven will protect her spotless innocence. Holkar, I know thee, and thou knowest *me*, too! Who with his single sword destroyed thy armies? Who, with his pistol, cleft in twain thy nose-ring? Who slew thy

generals? Who slew thy elephants? Three hundred mighty beasts went forth to battle: of these *I* slew one hundred and thirty-five! Dog, coward, ruffian, tyrant, unbeliever! Gahagan hates thee, spurns thee, spits on thee!

Holkar, as I made these uncomplimentary remarks, gave a scream of rage, and, drawing his scimitar, rushed on to despatch me at once (it was the very thing I wished for), when the third person sprang forward, and seizing his arm, cried—

‘Papa; oh, save him!’ It was Puttee Rooge! ‘Remember,’ continued she, ‘his misfortunes—remember, oh, remember my—love!’—and here she blushed, and putting one finger into her mouth and hanging down her head, looked the very picture of modest affection.

Holkar sulkily sheathed his scimitar, and muttered, ‘’Tis better as it is; had I killed him now, I had spared him the torture. None of this shameless fooling, Puttee Rooge,’ continued the tyrant, dragging her away. ‘Captain Gahagan dies three hours from hence.’ Puttee Rooge gave one scream and fainted—her father and the Vizier carried her off between them; nor was I loth to part with her, for, with all her love, she was as ugly as the deuce.

They were gone—my fate was decided. I had but three hours more of life: so I flung myself again on the sofa, and fell profoundly asleep. As it may happen to any of my readers to be in the same situation, and to be hanged themselves, let me earnestly entreat them to adopt this plan of going to sleep, which I for my part have repeatedly found to be successful. It saves unnecessary annoyance, it passes away a great deal of unpleasant time, and it prepares one to meet like a man the coming catastrophe.

Three o’clock came: the sun was at this time making his appearance in the heavens, and with it came the guards, who were appointed to conduct me to the torture. I woke, rose, was carried out, and was set on the very white donkey on which Loll Mahommed was conducted through the camp, after he was bastinadoed. Bobbachy Bahawder rode behind me, restored to his rank and state; troops of cavalry hemmed us on all sides; my ass was conducted by the common executioner: a crier went forward, shouting out, ‘Make way for the destroyer of the faithful—he goes to bear the punishment of his crimes.’ We came to the fatal plain: it was the very spot whence I had borne away the elephant, and in full sight of the fort. I looked towards it. Thank Heaven! King George’s banner waved on it still—a

crowd were gathered on the walls—the men, the dastards who had deserted me—and women, too. Among the latter I thought I distinguished *one* who—O gods! the thought turned me sick—I trembled and looked pale for the first time.

‘He trembles! he turns pale,’ shouted out Bobbachy Bahawder, ferociously exulting over his conquered enemy.

‘Dog!’ shouted I—(I was sitting with my head to the donkey’s tail, and so looked the Bobbachy full in the face)—‘not so pale as you looked when I felled you with this arm—not so pale as your women looked when I entered your harem!’ Completely chopfallen, the Indian ruffian was silent: at any rate, I had done for *him*.

We arrived at the place of execution—a stake, a couple of feet thick and eight high, was driven in the grass; round the stake, about seven feet from the ground, was an iron ring, to which were attached two fetters; in these my wrists were placed—two or three executioners stood near, with strange-looking instruments: others were blowing at a fire, over which was a caldron, and in the embers were stuck prongs and other instruments of iron.

The crier came forward and read my sentence. It was the same in effect as that which had been hinted to me the day previous by the Grand Vizier. I confess I was too agitated exactly to catch every word that was spoken.

Holkar himself, on a tall dromedary, was at a little distance. The Grand Vizier came up to me—it was his duty to stand by, and see the punishment performed. ‘It is yet time,’ said he.

I nodded my head, but did not answer.

The Vizier cast up to heaven a look of inexpressible anguish, and with a voice choking with emotion, said, ‘*Executioner—do your—duty!*’

The horrid man advanced—he whispered sulkily in the ears of the Grand Vizier, ‘*Guggly ka ghee, hum khedgereee,*’ said he, ‘*the oil does not boil yet—wait one minute.*’ The assistants blew, the fire blazed, the oil was heated. The Vizier drew a few feet aside, taking a large ladle full of the boiling liquid he advanced, and——

: : : : :

‘Whish! bang, bang! pop!’ the executioner was dead at my feet, shot through the head; the ladle of scalding oil had been dashed in the face of the unhappy Grand Vizier, who lay on the plain, howling. ‘Whish! bang! pop! Hurrah!—charge!—forwards!—cut them down!—no quarter!’

I saw—yes, no, yes, no, yes!—I saw regiment upon regiment of

galloping British horsemen, riding over the ranks of the flying natives. First of the host, I recognised, oh, Heaven! my AHMEDNUGGAR IRREGULARS! On came the gallant line of black steeds and horsemen; swift, swift before them rode my officers in yellow—Glogger, Pappendick, and Stuffle; their sabres gleamed in the sun, their voices rung in the air. ‘D—— them!’ they cried, ‘give it them, boys!’ A strength supernatural thrilled through my veins at that delicious music; by one tremendous effort, I wrenched the post from its foundation, five feet in the ground. I could not release my hands from the fetters, it is true; but, grasping the beam tightly, I sprung forward—with one blow, I levelled the five executioners in the midst of the fire, their fall upsetting the scalding oil-can; with the next, I swept the bearers of Bobbachy’s palanquin off their legs; with the third, I caught that chief himself in the small of the back, and sent him flying on to the sabres of my advancing soldiers!

The next minute, Glogger and Stuffle were in my arms, Pappendick leading on the Irregulars. Friend and foe in that wild chase had swept far away. We were alone; I was freed from my immense bar; and ten minutes afterwards, when Lord Lake trotted up with his staff, he found me sitting on it.

‘Look at Gahagan,’ said his lordship. ‘Gentlemen, did I not tell you we should be sure to find him *at his post*?’

The gallant old nobleman rode on: and this was the famous BATTLE OF FURRUCKABAD, or SURPRISE OF FUTTYGHUR, fought on the 17th of November 1804.

About a month afterwards, the following announcement appeared in *Boggleywallah Hurkaru* and other Indian papers:—‘Married, on the 25th of December, at Futtyghur, by the Rev. Dr. Snorter, Captain Goliah O’Grady Gahagan, Commanding Irregular Horse, Ahmednuggar, to Belinda, second daughter of Major-General Bulcher, C.B. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief gave away the bride; and after a splendid *déjeuné*, the happy pair set off to pass the Mango season at Hurrygurrybang. Venus must recollect, however, that Mars must not *always* be at her side. The Irregulars are nothing without their leader.’

Such was the paragraph—such the event—the happiest in the existence of

G. O’G. G., M.H.E.I.C.S.C.I.H.A.

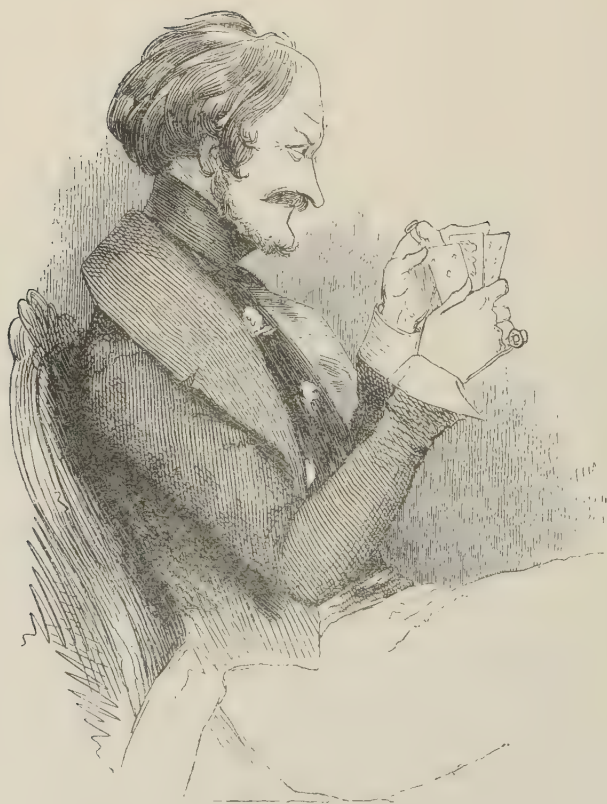


## CHARACTER SKETCHES



## CAPTAIN ROOK AND MR. PIGEON.

THE statistic mongers and dealers in geography have calculated to a nicety how many quartern loaves, bars of iron, pigs of lead, sacks of wool, Turks, Quakers, Methodists, Jews, Catholics, and Church of England men, are consumed or produced in the different countries of this wicked world : I should like to see an accurate table showing the rogues and dupes of each nation ; the calculation would form a pretty matter for a philosopher to speculate upon. The mind loves to repose, and broods benevolently over this expansive theme. What thieves are there at Paris, oh heavens ! and what a power of rogues with pigtailed and mandarin buttons at Pekin ! What crowds of swindlers are there at this very moment pursuing their trade at St. Petersburg : how many scoundrels are saying their prayers alongside of Don Carlos ! how many scores are jobbing under the pretty nose of Queen Christina ! what an inordinate number of rascals is there to be sure puffing tobacco and drinking flat small beer in all the capitals of Germany ; or else, without a rag to their ebony backs, swigging quass out of calabashes, and, smeared over with palm oil, lolling at the doors of clay huts in the sunny city of Timbuctoo ! It is not necessary to make any more topographical allusions, or, for illustrating the above position, to go through the whole Gazetteer ; but he is a bad philosopher who has not all these things in mind, and does not in his speculations or his estimate of mankind duly consider and weigh them. And it is fine and consolatory to think, that thoughtful Nature, which has provided sweet flowers for the humming bee ; fair running streams for glittering fish ; store of kids, deer, goats, and other fresh meat for roaring lions ; for active cats, mice ; for mice, cheese ; and so on ; establishing throughout the whole of her realm the great doctrine that where a demand is, there will be a supply (see the romances of Adam



CAPTAIN ROOK.

Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo, and the philosophical works of Miss Martineau): I say it is consolatory to think that, as nature has provided flies for the food of fishes, and flowers for bees, so she has created fools for rogues; and thus the scheme is consistent throughout. Yes, observation, with extensive view, will discover Captain Rooks all over the world, and Mr. Pigeons made for their benefit. Wherever shines the sun, you are sure to find Folly basking in it; and knavery is the shadow at Folly's heels.

It is not, however, necessary to go to Petersburg or Peking for rogues (and in truth I don't know whether the Timbuctoo Captain Rooks prefer cribbage or billiards). 'We are not birds,' as the Irishman says, 'to be in half-a-dozen places at once;' so let us pretermit all considerations of rogues in other countries, examining only those who flourish under our very noses. I have travelled much, and seen many men and cities; and, in truth, I think that our country of England produces the best soldiers, sailors, razors, tailors, brewers, hatters, and rogues, of all. Especially, there is no cheat like an English cheat. Our society produces them in the greatest numbers as well as of the greatest excellence. We supply all Europe with them. I defy you to point out a great city of the continent where half-a-dozen of them are not to be found: proofs of our enterprise, and samples of our home manufacture. Try Rome, Cheltenham, Baden, Toeplitz, Madrid, or Tzarskoselo: I have been in every one of them, and give you my honour that the Englishman is the best rascal to be found in all: better than your eager Frenchman; your swaggering Irishman, with a red velvet waistcoat and red whiskers; your grave Spaniard, with horrid goggle eyes and profuse diamond shirt-pins; your tallow-faced German baron, with white moustache and double chin, fat, pudgy, dirty fingers, and great gold thumb-ring; better even than your non-descript Russian—swindler and spy as he is by loyalty and education—the most dangerous antagonist we have. Who has the best coat even at Vienna? who has the neatest britzska at Baden? who drinks the best champagne at Paris? Captain Rook, to be sure, of her Britannic Majesty's service:—he *has* been of the service, that is to say, but often finds it convenient to sell out.

The life of a blackleg, which is the name contemptuously applied to Captain Rook in his own country, is such an easy, comfortable, careless, merry one, that I can't conceive why all the world do not turn Captain Rooks; unless, may be, there are some mysteries and difficulties in it which the vulgar know



nothing of, and which only men of real genius can overcome. Call on Captain Rook in the day (in London, he lives about St. James's; abroad, he has the very best rooms in the very best hotels), and you will find him at one o'clock dressed in the very finest *robe de chambre*, before a breakfast table covered with the prettiest patties and delicacies possible; smoking, perhaps, one of the biggest meerschaum pipes you ever saw; reading, possibly, *The Morning Post*, or a novel (he has only one volume in his whole room, and that from a circulating library); or having his hair dressed; or talking to a tailor about waistcoat patterns; or drinking soda-water with a glass of sherry; all this he does every morning, and it does not seem very difficult, and lasts until three. At three, he goes to a horse-dealer's, and lounges there for half-an-hour; at four, he is to be seen in the window of his club; at five, he is cantering and curvetting in Hyde Park with one or two more (he does not know any ladies, but has many male acquaintances: some, stout old gentlemen riding cobs, who knew his family, and give him a surly grunt of recognition; some, very young lads with pale dissolute faces, little moustaches, perhaps, or, at least, little tufts on their chin, who hail him eagerly as a man of fashion); at seven, he has a dinner at Long's or at the Clarendon; and so to bed very likely at five in the morning, after a quiet game of whist, broiled bones, and punch.

Perhaps he dines early at a tavern in Covent Garden; after which, you will see him at the theatre in a private box (Captain Rook affects the Olympic a good deal). In the box, besides himself, you may remark a young man—very young,—one of the lads who spoke to him in the Park this morning, and a couple of ladies: one shabby, melancholy, raw-boned, with numberless small white ringlets, large hands and feet, and a faded light-blue silk gown; she has a large cap, trimmed with yellow, and all sorts of crumpled flowers and greasy blonde lace; she wears large gilt ear-rings, and sits back, and nobody speaks to her, and she to nobody, except to say, 'Law, Maria, how well you *do* look to-night: there's a man opposite has been staring at you this three hours: I'm blest if it isn't him as we saw in the Park, dear!'

'I wish, Hanna, you'd 'old your tongue, and not bother me about the men. You don't believe Miss 'Ickman, Freddy, *do* you?' says Maria, smiling fondly on Freddy. Maria is sitting in front: she says she is twenty-three, though Miss Hickman knows very well she is thirty-one (Freddy is just of age). She wears a purple velvet gown, three different gold bracelets on each arm, as many

rings on each finger of each hand ; to one is hooked a gold smelling-bottle : she has an enormous fan, a laced pocket-handkerchief, a Cashmere shawl, which is continually falling off, and exposing very unnecessarily a pair of very white shoulders : she talks loud, always lets her playbill drop into the pit, and smells most pungently of Mr. Delcroix's shop. After this description it is not at all necessary to say who Maria is : Miss Hickman is her companion, and they live together in a very snug little house in Mayfair, which has just been new-furnished *à la Louis Quatorze* by Freddy, as we are positively informed. It is even said that the little carriage, with two little white ponies, which Maria drives herself in such a fascinating way through the Park, was purchased for her by Freddy too ; aye, and that Captain Rook got it for him—a great bargain, of course.

Such is Captain Rook's life. Can anything be more easy ? Suppose Maria says, 'Come home, Rook, and heat a cold chicken with us, and a glass of hiced champagne ;' and suppose he goes, and after chicken—just for fun—Maria proposes a little chicken-hazard :—she only plays for shillings, while Freddy, a little bolder, won't mind half-pound stakes himself. Is there any great harm in all this ? Well, after half-an-hour Maria grows tired, and Miss Hickman has been nodding asleep in the corner long ago ; so off the two ladies set, candle in hand.

'D—n it, Fred,' says Captain Rook, pouring out for that young gentleman his fifteenth glass of champagne, 'what luck you are in, if you did but know how to back it !'

What more natural and even kind of Rook than to say this ? Fred is evidently an inexperienced player ; and every experienced player knows that there is nothing like backing your luck. Freddy does. Well, fortune is proverbially variable ; and it is not at all surprising that Freddy, after having had so much luck at the commencement of the evening, should have the tables turned on him at some time or other.

Freddy loses.

It is deuced unlucky, to be sure, that he should have won all the little *coups*, and lost all the great ones ; but there is a plan which the commonest play-man knows, an infallible means of retrieving yourself at play : it is simply doubling your stake. Say, you lose a guinea : you bet two guineas, which if you win, you win a guinea and your original stake : if you lose, you have but to bet four guineas on the third stake, eight on the fourth, sixteen on the fifth, thirty-two on the sixth, and so on. It stands to reason that you cannot lose *always* ; and the very first time you win, all your losings are made up to you.

There is but one drawback to this infallible process: if you begin at a guinea, double every time you lose, and lose fifteen times, you will have lost exactly sixteen thousand three hundred and eighty-four guineas; a sum which probably exceeds the amount of your yearly income:—mine is considerably under that figure.

Freddy does not play this game, then, yet; but being a poor-spirited creature, as we have seen he must be by being afraid to win, he is equally poor-spirited when he begins to lose: he is frightened that is, increases his stakes, and backs his ill-luck: when a man does this, it is all over with him.

When Captain Rook goes home (the sun is peering through the shutters of the little drawing-room in Curzon Street, and the ghastly footboy, oh, how bleared his eyes look as he opens the door!); when Captain Rook goes home, he has Freddy's IOU's in his pocket to the amount, say, of three hundred pounds. Some people say that Maria has half of the money when it is paid; but this I don't believe: is Captain Rook the kind of fellow to give up a purse when his hand has once clawed hold of it?

Be this, however, true or not, it concerns us very little. The captain goes home to Brook Street, plunges into bed much too tired to say his prayers, and wakes the next morning at twelve, to go over such another day which we have just chalked out for him. As for Freddy, not poppy, nor mandragora, nor all the soda-water at the chemist's, can ever medicine him to that sweet sleep which he might have had but for his loss. 'If I had but played my king of hearts,' sighs Fred, 'and kept back my trump; but there's no standing against a fellow who turns up a king seven times running: if I *had* even but pulled up when Thomas (curse him!) brought up that infernal Curacoa punch, I should have saved a couple of hundred;' and so on, go Freddy's lamentations. Oh, luckless Freddy! dismal Freddy! silly gaby of a Freddy! you are hit now, and there is no cure for you but bleeding you almost to death's door. The homœopathic maxim of *similia similibus*, which means, I believe, that you are to be cured 'by a hair of the dog that bit you,' must be put in practice with regard to Freddy—only not in homœopathic infinitesimal doses; no hair of the dog that bit him; but *vice versa*, the dog of the hair that tickled him. Freddy has begun to play;—a mere trifle at first, but he must play it out: he must go the whole dog now, or there is no chance for him. He must play until he can play no more; he *will* play until he has not a shilling left to play with, when, perhaps, he may turn out an

honest man, though the odds are against him : the betting is in favour of his being a swindler always ; a rich or a poor one, as the case may be. I need not tell Freddy's name, I think, now ; it stands on his card :—

MR. FREDERICK PIGEON.

LONG'S HOTEL.

I have said the chances are, that Frederick Pigeon, Esq., will become a rich or a poor swindler, though the first chance, it must be confessed, is very remote. I once heard an actor, who could not write, speak, or even read English ; who was not fit for any trade in the world, and had not the *nous* to keep an apple-stall, and scarcely even enough sense to make a member of Parliament : I once, I say, heard an actor,—whose only qualifications were a large pair of legs, a large voice, and a very large neck,—curse his fate and his profession, by which, do what he would, he could only make eight guineas a week. ‘No men,’ said he, with a great deal of justice, ‘were so ill paid as “dramatic artists” ; they laboured for nothing all their youths, and had no provision for old age.’ With this, he sighed, and called for (it was on a Saturday night) the forty-ninth glass of brandy-and-water which he had drunk in the course of the week.

The excitement of his profession, I make no doubt, caused my friend Claptrap to consume this quantity of spirit-and-water, besides beer, in the morning after rehearsal ; and I could not help musing over his fate. It is a hard one. To eat, drink, work a little, and be jolly ; to be paid twice as much as you are worth, and then to go to ruin ; to drop off the tree when you are swelled out, seedy, and over-ripe ; and to lie rotting in the mud underneath, until at last you mingle with it.

Now, badly as the actor is paid (and the reader will the more readily pardon the above episode, because, in reality, it has nothing to do with the subject in hand), and luckless as his fate is, the lot of the poor blackleg is cast lower still. You never hear of a rich gambler ; or of one who wins in the end. Where does all the money go to which is lost among them ? Did you ever play a game at loo for sixpences ? At the end of the night a great many of those small coins have been lost, and, in consequence, won ; but ask the table all round : one man has won three shillings ; two have neither lost nor won ; one rather thinks



MR. PIGEON.



he has lost ; and the three others have lost two pounds each. Is not this the fact, known to everybody who indulges in round games, and especially the noble game of loo ? I often think that the devil's books, as cards are called, are let out to us from Old Nick's circulating library, and that he lays his paw upon a certain part of the winnings, and carries it off privily : else, what becomes of all the money ?

For instance, there is the gentleman whom the newspapers call 'a noble earl of sporting celebrity' ;—if he has lost a shilling, according to the newspaper accounts, he has lost fifty millions : he drops fifty thousand pounds at the Derby, just as you and I would lay down twopence-halfpenny for half an ounce of Macabaw. Who has won these millions ? Is it Mr. Crockford, or Mr. Bond, or Mr. *Salon-des-Étrangers* ? (I do not call these latter gentlemen gamblers, for their speculation is a certainty) ; but who wins his money, and everybody else's money who plays and loses ? Much money is staked in the absence of Mr. Crockford ; many notes are given without the interference of the Bonds ; there are hundreds of thousands of gamblers who are *étrangers* even to the *Salon-des-Étrangers*.

No, my dear sir, it is not in the public gambling-houses that the money is lost ; it is not in them that your virtue is chiefly in danger. Better by half lose your income, your fortune, or your master's money, in a decent public hell, than in the private society of such men as my friend Captain Rook ; but we are again and again digressing ; the point is, is the Captain's trade a good one, and does it yield tolerably good interest for outlay and capital ?

To the latter question first :—at this very season of May, when the rooks are very young, have you not, my dear friend, often tasted them in pies ?—they are then so tender that you cannot tell the difference between them and pigeons. So, in like manner, our Rook has been in his youth undistinguishable from a pigeon. He does as he has been done by : yea, he has been plucked as even now he plucks his friend Mr. Frederick Pigeon. Say that he began the world with ten thousand pounds : every maravedi of this is gone ; and may be considered as the capital which he has sacrificed to learn his trade. Having spent £10,000, then, on an annuity of £650, he must look to a larger interest for his money—say fifteen hundred, two thousand, or three thousand pounds, decently to repay his risk and labour. Besides the money sunk in the first place, his profession requires continual annual outlays ; as thus—

Horses, carriages (including Epsom, Goodwood, Ascot, etc.) . . . . .	£500	0	0
Lodgings, servants, and board . . . . .	350	0	0
Watering-places, and touring . . . . .	300	0	0
Dinners to give . . . . .	150	0	0
Pocket-money . . . . .	150	0	0
Gloves, handkerchiefs, perfumery, and tobacco (very moderate) . . . . .	150	0	0
Tailor's bill (£100 say, never paid) . . . . .	0	0	0
TOTAL . . . . .	£1,600	0	0

I defy any man to carry on the profession in a decent way under the above sum: ten thousand sunk, and sixteen hundred annual expenses; no, it is *not* a good profession: it is *not* good interest for one's money; it is *not* a fair remuneration for a gentleman of birth, industry, and genius; and my friend Claptrap, who growls about *his* pay, may bless his eyes that he was not born a gentleman and bred up to such an unprofitable calling as this. Considering his trouble, his outlay, his birth, and breeding, the Captain is most wickedly and basely rewarded. And when he is obliged to retreat; when his hand trembles, his credit is fallen, his bills laughed at by every money-lender in Europe, his tailors rampant and inexorable—in fact, when the *coupe* of life will *sauter* for him no more—who will help the play-worn veteran? As Mitchell sings after Aristophanes—

In glory he was seen, when his years as yet were green;  
 But now when his dotage is on him,  
 God help him!—for no eye of those who pass him by  
 Throws a look of compassion upon him.

Who indeed will help him?—not his family, for he has bled his father, his uncle, his old grandmother; he has had slices out of his sisters' portions, and quarrelled with his brothers-in-law; the old people are dead; the young ones hate him, and will give him nothing. Who will help him?—not his friends: in the first place, my dear sir, a man's friends very seldom do; in the second place, it is Captain Rook's business not to keep but to give up his friends. His acquaintances do not last more than a year: the time, namely, during which he is employed in plucking them; then they part. Pigeon has not a single feather left to his tail, and how should he help Rook, whom, *au reste*, he has learned to detest most cordially, and has found out to be a rascal? When Rook's ill day comes, it is simply because he has no more friends;

he has exhausted them all, plucked every one as clean as the palm of your hand. And to arrive at this conclusion, Rook has been spending sixteen hundred a year, and the prime of his life, and has moreover sunk ten thousand pounds! *Is this a proper reward for a gentleman?* I say it is a sin and a shame, that an English gentleman should be allowed thus to drop down the stream without a single hand to help him.

The moral of the above remarks, I take to be this: that black-legging is as bad a trade as can be; and so let parents and guardians look to it, and not apprentice their children to such a villainous scurvy way of living.

It must be confessed, however, that there are some individuals who have for the profession such a natural genius that no entreaties or example of parents will keep them from it, and no restraint or occupation occasioned by another calling. They do what Christians do not do; they leave all to follow their master, the devil; they cut friends, families, and good, thriving, profitable trades to put up with this one, that is both unthrifty and unprofitable. They are in regiments: ugly whispers about certain midnight games at blind-hookey, and a few odd bargains in horseflesh, are borne abroad, and Cornet Rook receives the gentlest hint in the world that he had better sell out. They are in counting-houses, with a promise of partnership, for which papa is to lay down a handsome premium; but the firm of Hobbs, Bobbs, and Higgory can never admit a young gentleman who is a notorious gambler, is much oftener at the races than his desk, and has bills daily falling due at his private banker's. The father, that excellent man, old Sam Rook, so well known on 'Change in the war-time, discovers, at the end of five years, that his son has spent rather more than the four thousand pounds intended for his partnership, and cannot, in common justice to his other thirteen children, give him a shilling more. A pretty pass for flash young Tom Rook, with four horses in the stable, a protemporaneous Mrs. Rook, very likely, in an establishment near the Regent's Park, and a bill for three hundred and seventy-five pounds coming due on the fifth of next month!

Sometimes young Rook is destined to the bar: and I am glad to introduce one of these gentlemen and his history to the notice of the reader.

He was the son of an amiable gentleman, the Reverend Athanasius Rook, who took high honours at Cambridge in the year 1, was a fellow of Trinity in the year 2; and so continued a fellow and tutor of the College until a living fell vacant, on which he seized. It was only two hundred and fifty pounds a year; but

the fact is, Athanasius was in love. Miss Gregory, a pretty demure simple governess at Miss Mickle's establishment for young ladies in Cambridge (where the reverend gentleman used often of late to take his tea), had caught the eye of the honest college tutor; and in Trinity walks, and up and down the Trumpington road, he walked with her (and another young lady of course), talked with her, and told his love.

Miss Gregory had not a rap, as might be imagined; but she loved Athanasius with her whole soul and strength, and was the most orderly, cheerful, tender, smiling, bustling, little wife that ever a country parson was blest withal. Athanasius took a couple of pupils at a couple of hundred guineas each, and so made out a snug income; aye, laid by for a rainy day—a little portion for Harriet, when she should grow up and marry, and a help for Tom at College and at the bar. For you must know there were two little Rooks now crowing in the rookery; and very happy were father and mother, I can tell you, to put meat down their tender little throats. Oh, if ever a man was good and happy, it was Athanasius; if ever a woman was happy and good, it was his wife: not the whole parish, not the whole county, not the whole kingdom, could produce such a snug rectory, or such a pleasant *ménage*.

Athanasius's fame as a scholar, too, was great: and as his charges were very high, and as he received but two pupils, there was, of course, much anxiety among wealthy parents to place their children under his care. Future squires, bankers, yea lords and dukes, came to profit by his instructions, and were led by him gracefully over the 'Asses' bridge' into the sublime regions of mathematics, or through the syntax into the pleasant paths of classic lore.

In the midst of these companions, Tom Rook grew up; more fondled and petted, of course, than they; cleverer than they; as handsome, dashing, well-instructed a lad, for his years, as ever went to college to be a senior wrangler, and went down without any such honour.

Fancy, then, our young gentleman installed at college, whither his father has taken him, and with fond veteran recollections has surveyed hall and grass-plots, and the old porter, and the old fountain, and the old rooms in which he used to live. Fancy the sobs of good little Mrs. Rook, as she parted with her boy; and the tears of sweet pale Harriet, as she clung round his neck, and brought him (in a silver paper, slobbered with many tears) a little crimson silk purse (with two guineas of her own in it, poor thing)! Fancy all this, and fancy young Tom, sorry too, but yet

restless and glad, panting for the new life opening upon him ; the freedom, the joy of the manly struggle for fame, which he vows he will win. Tom Rook, in other words, is installed at Trinity College, attends lectures, reads at home, goes to chapel, uses wine-parties moderately, and bids fair to be one of the topmost men of his year.

Tom goes down for the Christmas vacation. (What a man he is grown, and how his sister and mother quarrel which shall walk with him down the village ; and what stories the old gentleman lugs out with his old port, and how he quotes Æschylus, to be sure !) The pupils are away too, and the three have Tom in quiet. Alas ! I fear the place has grown a little too quiet for Tom : however, he reads very stoutly of mornings ; and sister Harriet peeps with a great deal of wonder into huge books of scribbling paper, containing many strange diagrams, and complicated arrangements of *x*'s and *y*'s.

May comes, and the college examinations ; the delighted parent receives at breakfast, on the 10th of that month, two letters, as follows :

FROM THE REV. SOLOMON SNORTER TO THE REV. ATHANASIUS ROOK.

TRINITY, *May 10.*

DEAR CREDO<sup>1</sup>—I wish you joy. Your lad is the best man of his year, and I hope in four more to see him at our table. In classics he is, my dear friend, *facile princeps* ; in mathematics he was run hard (*entre nous*) by a lad of the name of Snick, a Westmoreland man and a sizer. We must keep up Thomas to his mathematics, and I have no doubt we shall make a fellow and a wrangler of him.

I send you his college bill, £105 : 10s. ; rather heavy, but this is the first term, and that you know is expensive : I shall be glad to give you a receipt for it. By the way, the young man is *rather* too fond of amusement, and lives with a very expensive set. Give him a lecture on this score.—Yours,

SOL. SNORTER.

Next comes Mr. Tom Rook's own letter ; it is long, modest ; we only give the postscript :

*P.S.*—Dear father, I forgot to say that, as I live in the very best set in the University (Lord Bagwig, the Duke's eldest son you know, vows he will give me a living), I have been led into one or two expenses which will frighten you : I lost £30 to the Honourable Mr. Deuceace (a son of Lord Crabs) at Bagwig's, the other day at dinner ; and owe £54

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<sup>1</sup> This is probably a joke on the Christian name of Mr. Rook.



more for desserts and hiring horses, which I can't send into Snorter's bill.<sup>1</sup> Hiring horses is so deuced expensive ; next term I must have a nag of my own, that's positive.

The Reverend Athanasius read the postscript with much less gusto than the letter : however, Tom has done his duty, and the old gentleman won't balk his pleasure ; so he sends him £100, with a 'God bless you !' and Mamma adds, in a postscript, that 'he must always keep well with his aristocratic friends, for he was made only for the best society.'

A year or two passes on : Tom comes home for the vacations ; but Tom has sadly changed ; he has grown haggard and pale. At the second year's examination (owing to an unlucky illness) Tom was not classed at all ; and Snick, the Westmoreland man, has carried everything before him. Tom drinks more after dinner than his father likes ; he is always riding about and dining in the neighbourhood, and coming home, quite odd, his mother says—ill-humoured, unsteady on his feet, and husky in his talk. The Reverend Athanasius begins to grow very, very grave : they have high words, even, the father and son ; and oh ! how Harriet and her mother tremble and listen at the study-door when these disputes are going on !

The last term of Tom's undergraduateship arrives : he is in ill health, but he will make a mighty effort to retrieve himself for his degree ; and early in the cold winter's morning,—late, late at night—he toils over his books : and the end is that, a month before the examinations, Thomas Rook, Esquire, has a brain fever, and Mrs. Rook, and Miss Rook, and the Reverend Athanasius Rook, are all lodging at the Hoop, an inn in Cambridge town, and day and night round the couch of poor Tom.

Oh, sin, woe, repentance ! oh, touching reconciliation and burst of tears on the part of son and father, when one morning at the parsonage, after Tom's recovery, the old gentleman produces a bundle of receipts, and says, with a broken voice, 'There, boy, don't be vexed about your debts. Boys will be boys, I know, and I have paid all demands.' Everybody cries in the house at this news, the mother and daughter most profusely, even Mrs. Stokes, the old housekeeper, who shakes master's hand, and actually kisses Mr. Tom.

Well, Tom begins to read a little for his fellowship, but in vain ; he is beaten by Mr. Snick, the Westmoreland man. He has no hopes of a living ; Lord Bagwig's promises were all moon-

<sup>1</sup> It is, or was, the custom for young gentlemen at Cambridge to have unlimited credit with tradesmen, whom the college tutors paid, and then sent the bills to the parents of the young men.

shine. Tom must go to the bar ; and his father, who has long left off taking pupils, must take them again, to support his son in London.

Why tell you what happens when there ? Tom lives at the west end of the town, and never goes near the Temple ; Tom goes to Ascot and Epsom along with his great friends ; Tom has a long bill with Mr. Rymell, another long bill with Mr. Nugee ; he gets into the hands of the Jews—and his father rushes up to London on the outside of the coach to find Tom in a spunging-house in Cursitor Street—the nearest approach he has made to the Temple since his three years' residence in London.

I don't like to tell you the rest of the history. The Reverend Athanasius was not immortal, and he died a year after his visit to the spunging-house, leaving his son exactly one farthing, and his wife one hundred pounds a year, with remainder to his daughter. But, Heaven bless you ! the poor things would never allow Tom to want while they had plenty, and they sold out and sold out the three thousand pounds until, at the end of three years, there did not remain one single stiver of them ; and now Miss Harriet is a governess, with sixty pounds a year, supporting her mother, who lives upon fifty.

As for Tom, he is a regular *leg* now—leading the life already described. When I met him last it was at Baden, where he was on a professional tour, with a carriage, a courier, a valet, a confederate, and a case of pistols. He has been in five duels, he has killed a man who spoke lightly about his honour ; and at French or English hazard, at billiards, at whist, at loo, *écarté*, blind-hokey, drawing straws, or beggar-my-neighbour, he will cheat you—cheat you for a hundred pounds or for a guinea, and murder you afterwards, if you like.

Abroad, our friend takes military rank, and calls himself Captain Rook : when asked of what service, he says he was with Don Carlos or Queen Christina ; and certain it is that he was absent for a couple of years nobody knows where ; he may have been with General Evans, or he may have been at the Sainte Pélagie in Paris, as some people vow he was.

We must wind up this paper with some remarks concerning poor little Pigeon. Vanity has been little Pigeon's failing through life. He is a linendraper's son and has been left with money : and the silly fashionable works that he has read, and the silly female relatives that he has—(N.B. All young men with money have silly, flattering she-relatives)—and the silly trips that he has made to watering-places, where he has scraped acquaintance with the Honourable Tom Mountcoffeehouse, Lord Ballyhooly,

the celebrated German Prince, Sweller Mobskau, and their like (all Captain Rooks in their way), have been the ruin of him.

I have not the slightest pity in the world for little Pigeon. Look at him ! See in what absurd finery the little prig is dressed. Wine makes his poor little head ache, but he will drink because it is manly. In mortal fear he puts himself behind a curvetting camelopard of a cab horse ; or perched on the top of a prancing dromedary, is borne through Rotten Row, when he would give the world to be on his own sofa, or with his own mamma and sisters, over a quiet pool of commerce and a cup of tea. How riding does scarify his poor little legs, and shake his poor little sides ! Smoking, how it does turn his little stomach inside out ! and yet smoke he will : Sweller Mobskau smokes ; Mountcoffee-house don't mind a cigar ; and as for Ballyhooly, he will puff you a dozen in a day, and says very truly that Pontet won't supply *him* with near such good ones as he sells Pigeon. The fact is, that Pontet vowed seven years ago not to give his lordship a sixpence more credit ; and so the good-natured nobleman always helps himself out of Pigeon's box.

On the shoulders of these aristocratic individuals, Mr. Pigeon is carried into certain clubs, or perhaps we should say he walks into them by the aid of these 'legs.' But they keep him always to themselves. Captain Rooks must rob in company ; but of course, the greater the profits, the fewer the partners must be. Three are positively requisite, however, as every reader must know who has played a game at whist : number one to be Pigeon's partner, and curse his stars at losing, and propose higher play, and 'settle' with number two ; number three to transact business with Pigeon, and drive him down to the city to sell out. We have known an instance or two where, after a very good night's work, number three has bolted with the winnings altogether, but the practice is dangerous ; not only disgraceful to the profession, but it cuts up your own chance afterwards, as no one will act with you. There is only one occasion on which such a manœuvre is allowable. Many are sick of the profession, and desirous to turn honest men ; in this case, when you can get a good *coup*, five thousand say, bolt without scruple. One thing is clear, the other men must be mum, and you can live at Vienna comfortably on the interest of five thousand pounds.

Well then, in the society of these amiable confederates little Pigeon goes through that period of time which is necessary for the purpose of plucking him. To do this, you must not, in most cases, tug at the feathers so as to hurt him, else he may be frightened, and hop away to somebody else : nor, generally speaking,

will the feathers come out so easily at first as they will when he is used to it, and then they drop in handfuls. Nor need you have the least scruple in so causing the little creature to moult artificially ; if you don't, somebody else will : a Pigeon goes into the world fated, as Chateaubriand says—

Pigeon, *il va subir le sort de tout pigeon.*

He *must* be plucked ; it is the purpose for which nature has formed him : if you, Captain Rook, do not perform the operation on a green table lighted by two wax candles, and with two packs of cards to operate with, some other Rook will : are there not railroads, and Spanish bonds, and bituminous companies, and Cornish tin mines, and old dowagers with daughters to marry ? If you leave him, Rook of Birchin Lane will have him as sure as fate ; if Rook of Birchin Lane don't hit him, Rook of the Stock Exchange will blaze away both barrels at him, which, if the poor trembling flutterer escape, he will fly over and drop into the rookery, where dear old swindling Lady Rook and her daughters will find him, and nestle him in their bosoms, and in that soft place pluck him, until he turns out as naked as a cannon-ball.

Be not thou scrupulous, O Captain ! seize on Pigeon ; pluck him gently but boldly ; but above all, never let him go. If he is a stout cautious bird, of course *you* must be more cautious ; if he is excessively silly and scared, perhaps the best way is just to take him round the neck at once, and strip the whole stock of plumage from his back.

The feathers of the human pigeon being thus violently abstracted from him, no others supply their place : and yet I do not pity him. He is now only undergoing the destiny of pigeons, and is, I do believe, as happy in his plucked as in his feather state. He cannot purse out his breast, and bury his head, and fan his tail, and strut in the sun as if he were a turkey-cock. Under all those fine airs and feathers, he was but what he is now, a poor little meek, silly, cowardly bird, and his state of pride is not a whit more natural to him than his fallen condition. He soon grows used to it. He is too great a coward to despair ; much too mean to be frightened because he must live by doing meanness. He is sure, if he cannot fly, to fall somehow or other on his little miserable legs : on these he hops about, and manages to live somewhere in his own mean way. He has but a small stomach, and doesn't mind what food he puts into it. He sponges on his relatives ; or else, just before his utter ruin, he marries and has nine children (and such a family *always* lives) ; he turns bully, most likely, takes to drinking, and beats his wife, who supports him or takes

to drinking too ; or he gets a little place, a very little place : you hear he has some tide-waitership, or is clerk to some new milk company, or is lurking about a newspaper. He dies, and a subscription is raised for the Widow Pigeon, and we look no more to find a likeness of him in his children, who are as a new race. Blessed are ye little ones, for ye are born in poverty, and may bear it, or surmount it, and die rich. But woe to the Pigeons of this earth, for they are born rich that they may die poor.

The end of Captain Rook—for we must bring both him and the paper to an end—is not more agreeable, but somewhat more manly and majestic than the conclusion of Mr. Pigeon. If you walk over to the Queen's Bench Prison, I would lay a wager that a dozen such are to be found there in a moment. They have a kind of Lucifer look with them, and stare at you with fierce, twinkling, crow-footed eyes ; or grin from under huge grizzly moustaches, as they walk up and down in their tattered brocades. What a dreadful activity is that of a madhouse, or a prison !—a dreary flagged court-yard, a long dark room, and the inmates of it, like the inmates of the menagerie-cages, ceaselessly walking up and down ! Mary Queen of Scots says very touchingly :—

*Pour mon mal estrangeur  
Je ne m'arreste en place ;  
Mais, j'en ay beau changer  
Si ma douleur n'efface !*

Up and down, up and down—the inward woe seems to spur the body onwards ; and I think in both madhouse and prison you will find plenty of specimens of our Captain Rook. It is fine to mark him under the pressure of this woe, and see how fierce he looks when stirred up by the long pole of memory. In these asylums, the Rooks end their lives ; or, more happy, they die miserably in a miserable provincial town abroad, and for the benefit of coming Rooks they commonly die early : you as seldom hear of an old Rook (practising his trade) as of a rich one. It is a short-lived trade : not merry, for the gains are most precarious, and perpetual doubt and dread are not pleasant accompaniments of a profession :—not agreeably either, for though Captain Rook does not mind *being* a scoundrel, no man likes to be considered as such, and as such, he knows very well, does the world consider Captain Rook :—not profitable, for the expenses of the trade swallow up all the profits of it, and in addition leave the bankrupt with certain habits that have become as nature to him, and which, to live, he must gratify. I know no more miserable wretch than our Rook in his autumn days,



at dismal Calais or Boulogne, or at the Bench yonder, with a whole load of diseases and wants, that have come to him in the course of his profession ; the diseases and wants of sensuality, always pampered, and now agonising for lack of its unnatural food ; the mind which *must* think now, and has only bitter recollections, mortified ambitions, and unavailing scoundrelisms to con over ! Oh, Captain Rook ! what nice ‘chums’ do you take with you into prison ; what pleasant companions of exile follow you over the *fines patriæ*, or attend, the only watchers, round your miserable death-bed !

My son, be not a Pigeon in thy dealings with the world :—but it is better to be a Pigeon than a Rook.

## THE FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS.

PAYING a visit the other day to my friend Timson, who, I need not tell the public, is editor of that famous evening paper, the \* \* \* (and let it be said that there is no more profitable acquaintance than a gentlemen in Timson's situation, in whose office, at three o'clock daily, you are sure to find new books, lunch, magazines, and innumerable tickets for concerts and plays); going, I say, into Timson's office, I saw on the table an immense paper cone or funnel, containing a bouquet, of such a size that it might be called a bosquet, wherein all sorts of rare geraniums, luscious magnolias, stately dahlias, and other floral produce were gathered together—a regular flower-stack.

Timson was for a brief space invisible, and I was left alone in the room with the odours of this tremendous bow-pot, which filled the whole of the inky, smutty, dingy apartment with an agreeable incense. '*O rus! quando te aspiciam?*' exclaimed I, out of the Latin grammar, for imagination had carried me away to the country, and was about to make another excellent and useful quotation (from the 14th book of the *Iliad*, madam), concerning 'ruddy lotuses, and crocuses, and hyacinths,' when all of a sudden Timson appeared. His head and shoulders had, in fact, been engulfed in the flowers, among which he might be compared to any Cupid, butterfly, or bee. His little face was screwed up into such an expression of comical delight and triumph, that a Methodist parson would have laughed at it in the midst of a funeral sermon.

'What are you giggling at?' said Mr. Timson, assuming a high, aristocratic air.

'Has the goddess Flora made you a present of that bower wrapped up in white paper, or did it come by the vulgar hands of yonder gorgeous footman, at whom all the little printers' devils are staring in the passage?'

'Stuff,' said Timson, picking to pieces some rare exotic, worth at the very least fifteenpence; 'a friend, who knows that Mrs.



THE FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS.

How fluent nonsense trickles from her pen !

Timson and I are fond of these things, has sent us a nosegay ; that's all.'

I saw how it was. 'Augustus Timson,' exclaimed I, sternly ; 'the Pimlico's have been with you ; if that footman did not wear the Pimlico plush, ring the bell and order me out ; if that three-cornered billet lying in your snuff-box has not the Pimlico seal to it, never ask me to dinner again.'

'Well, if it *does*,' says Mr. Timson, who flushed as red as a peony, 'what is the harm ? Lady Fanny Flummery may send flowers to her friends, I suppose ? The conservatories at Pimlico House are famous all the world over, and the countess promised me a nosegay the very last time I dined there.'

'Was that the day when she gave you a box of bonbons for your darling little Ferdinand ?'

'No, another day.'

'Or the day when she promised you her carriage for Epsom Races ?'

'No.'

'Or the day when she hoped that her Lucy and your Barbara-Jane might be acquainted, and sent to the latter from the former a new French doll and tea-things ?'

'Fiddlestick !' roared out Augustus Timson, Esquire ; 'I wish you wouldn't come bothering here. I tell you that Lady Pimlico is my friend—my friend, mark you, and I will allow no man to abuse her in my presence : I say again *no man* !' where-with Mr. Timson plunged both his hands violently into his breeches-pockets, looked me in the face sternly, and began jingling his keys and shillings about.

At this juncture (it being about half-past three o'clock in the afternoon), a one-horse chaise drove up to the \* \* \* office (Timson lives at Clapham, and comes in and out in this machine)—a one-horse chaise drove up ; and amidst a scuffling and crying of small voices, good humoured Mrs. Timson bounced into the room.

'Here we are, deary,' said she : 'we'll walk to the Mery-weathers ; and I've told Sam to be in Charles Street at twelve with the chaise : it wouldn't do, you know, to come out of the Pimlico box, and have the people cry, "Mrs. Timson's carriage !" for old Sam and the chaise.'

Timson, to this loving and voluble address of his lady, gave a peevish, puzzled look towards the stranger, as much as to say, '*He's* here.'

'La, Mr. Smith ! and how *do* you do ?—So rude—I didn't see you : but the fact is, we are all in *such* a bustle ! Augustus has

got Lady Pimlico's box for the *Puritani* to-night, and I vowed I'd take the children.'

Those young persons were evidently, from their costume, prepared for some extraordinary festival. Miss Barbara-Jane, a young lady of six years old, in a pretty pink slip and white muslin, her dear little poll bristling over with papers, to be removed previous to the play; while Master Ferdinand had a pair of nankeens (I can recollect Timson in them in the year 1825—a great buck), and white silk stockings, which belonged to his mamma. His frill was very large and very clean, and he was fumbling perpetually at a pair of white kid gloves, which his mamma forbade him to assume before the opera.

And 'Look here!' and 'Oh, precious!' and 'Oh, my!' were uttered by these worthy people, as they severally beheld the vast bouquet, into which Mrs. Timson's head flounced, just as her husband's had done before.

'I must have a green-house at the Snuggery, that's positive, Timson, for I'm passionately fond of flowers—and how kind of Lady Fanny! Do you know her ladyship, Mr. Smith?'

'Indeed, madam, I don't remember having ever spoken to a lord or a lady in my life.'

Timson smiled in a supercilious way. Mrs. Timson exclaimed, 'La, how odd! Augustus knows ever so many. Let's see, there's the Countess of Pimlico and Lady Fanny Flummery; Lord Doldrum (Timson touched up his *Travels*, you know); Lord Gasterton, Lord Guttlebury's eldest son; Lady Pawpaw (they say she ought not to be visited, though); Baron Strum—Strom—Strumpf—'

What the baron's name was I have never been able to learn; for here Timson burst out with a 'Hold your tongue, Bessy,' which stopped honest Mrs. Timson's harmless prattle altogether, and obliged that worthy woman to say meekly, 'Well, Gus, I did not think there was any harm in mentioning your acquaintance.' Good soul! it was only because she took pride in her Timson that she loved to enumerate the great names of the persons who did him honour. My friend the editor was, in fact, in a cruel position, looking foolish before his old acquaintance, stricken in that unfortunate sore point in his honest good-humoured character. The man adored the aristocracy, and had that wonderful respect for a lord which, perhaps, the observant reader may have remarked, especially characterises men of Timson's way of thinking.

In old days at the club (we held it in a small public-house near the Coburg Theatre, some of us having free admissions to that place of amusement, and some of us living for convenience in the



immediate neighbourhood of one of his Majesty's prisons in that quarter)—in old days, I say, at our spouting and toasted cheese club, called 'The Forum,' Timson was called Brutus Timson, and not Augustus, in consequence of the ferocious republicanism which characterised him, and his utter scorn and hatred of a bloated do-nothing aristocracy. His letters in *The Weekly Sentinel*, signed 'Lictor,' must be remembered by all our readers: he advocated the repeal of the corn laws, the burning of machines, the rights of labour, etc. etc., wrote some pretty defences of Robespierre, and used seriously to avow, when at all in liquor, that, in consequence of those 'Lictor' letters, Lord Castlereagh had tried to have him murdered, and thrown over Blackfriars Bridge.

By what means Augustus Timson rose to his present exalted position it is needless here to state; suffice it, that in two years he was completely bound over neck-and-heels to the bloodthirsty aristocrats, hereditary tyrants, etc. One evening he was asked to dine with a secretary of the Treasury (the \* \* \* is ministerial, and has been so these forty-nine years); at the house of that secretary of the Treasury he met a lord's son: walking with Mrs. Timson in the park next Sunday, that lord's son saluted him. Timson was from that moment a slave, had his coats made at the west end, cut his wife's relations (they are dealers in marine stores, and live at Wapping), and had his name put down at two clubs.

Who was the lord's son? Lord Pimlico's son, to be sure, the Honourable Frederick Flummery, who married Lady Fanny Foxy, daughter of Pitt Castlereagh, second Earl of Reynard, Kilbrush Castle, county Kildare. The earl had been ambassador in '14; Mr. Flummery, his *attaché*: he was twenty-one at that time, with the sweetest tuft on his chin in the world. Lady Fanny was only four-and-twenty, just jilted by Prince Scoronconcolo, the horrid man who had married Miss Solomonson with a plum. Fanny had nothing—Frederick had about seven thousand pounds less. What better could the young things do than marry? Marry they did, and in the most delicious secrecy. Old Reynard was charmed to have an opportunity of breaking with one of his daughters for ever, and only longed for an occasion never to forgive the other nine.

A wit of the Prince's time, who inherited and transmitted to his children a vast fortune of genius, was cautioned on his marriage to be very economical. 'Economical!' said he; 'my wife has nothing, and I have nothing: I suppose a man can't live under *that*!' Our interesting pair, by judiciously employing the same capital, managed, year after year, to live very comfortably, until, at last, they were received into Pimlico House by the dowager

(who has it for her life), where they live very magnificently. Lady Fanny gives the most magnificent entertainments in London, has the most magnificent equipage, and a very fine husband ; who has his equipage as fine as her ladyship's ; his seat in the omnibus while her ladyship is in the second tier. They say he plays a good deal—ay, and pays, too, when he loses.

And how, pr'ythee? Her ladyship is a FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS. She has been at this game for fifteen years ; during which period she has published forty-five novels, edited twenty-seven new magazines and I don't know how many annuals, besides publishing poems, plays, desultory thoughts, memoirs, recollections of travel, and pamphlets without number. Going one day to church, a lady, whom I knew by her Leghorn bonnet and red ribbons, *ruche* with poppies and marigolds, brass ferrennière, great red hands, black silk gown, thick shoes, and black silk stockings ; a lady, whom I knew, I say, to be a devotional cook, made a bob to me just as the psalm struck up, and offered me a share of her hymn-book. It was,

## HEAVENLY CHORDS ;

A COLLECTION OF

## Sacred Strains,

SELECTED, COMPOSED, AND EDITED, BY THE

LADY FRANCES JULIANA FLUMMERY.

—being simply a collection of heavenly chords robbed from the lyres of Watts, Wesley, Brady, and Tate, etc. ; and of sacred strains from the rare collection of Sternhold and Hopkins. Out of this, cook and I sang ; and it is amazing how much our fervour was increased by thinking that our devotions were directed by a lady whose name was in the Red Book.

The thousands of pages that Lady Flummery has covered with ink exceed all belief. You must have remarked, madam, in respect of this literary fecundity, that your amiable sex possesses vastly greater capabilities than we do ; and that while a man is painfully labouring over a letter of two sides, a lady will produce a dozen pages, crossed, dashed, and so beautifully neat and close, as to be well-nigh invisible. The readiest of ready pens has Lady Flummery ; her Pegasus gallops over hot-pressed satin so as to distance all gentlemen riders : like Camilla, it scours the plain -- of Bath, and never seems punished or fatigued ; only it runs so fast that it often leaves all sense behind it ; and there it goes on,

on, scribble, scribble, scribble, never flagging until it arrives at that fair winning post on which is written 'FINIS,' or 'THE END'; and shows that the course, whether it be of novel, annual, poem, or what not, is complete.

Now, the author of these pages doth not pretend to describe the inward thoughts, ways, and manner of being, of my Lady Flummery, having made before that humiliating confession, that lords and ladies are personally unknown to him; so that all milliners, butchers' ladies, dashing young clerks, and apprentices, or other persons who are anxious to cultivate a knowledge of the aristocracy, had better skip over this article altogether. But he hath heard it whispered, from pretty good authority, that the manners and customs of these men and women resemble, in no inconsiderable degree, the habits and usages of other men and women, whose names are unrecorded by Debrett. Granting this, and that Lady Flummery is a woman pretty much like another, the philosophical reader will be content that we rather consider her ladyship in her public capacity, and examine her influence upon mankind in general.

Her person, then, being thus put out of the way, her works, too, need not be very carefully sifted and criticised; for what is the use of peering into a millstone, or making calculations about the figure 0? The woman has not, in fact, the slightest influence upon literature for good or for evil: there are a certain number of fools whom she catches in her flimsy traps; and why not? They are made to be humbugged, or how should we live? Lady Flummery writes everything; that is, nothing. Her poetry is mere wind; her novels, stark nought; her philosophy, sheer vacancy: how should she do any better than she does? how could she succeed if she *did* do any better? If she did write well, she would not be Lady Flummery; she would not be praised by Timson and the critics, because she would be an honest woman, and would not bribe them. Nay, she would probably be written down by Timson and Co., because, being an honest woman, she utterly despised them and their craft.

We have said what she writes for the most part. Individually, she will throw off any number of novels that Messrs. Soap and Diddle will pay for; and collectively, by the aid of self and friends, scores of *Lyrics of Loveliness*, *Beams of Beauty*, *Pearls of Purity*, etc. Who does not recollect the success which her *Pearls of the Peerage* had? She is going to do the *Beauties of the Baronetage*; then we shall have the *Daughters of the Dustmen*, or some such other collection of portraits. Lady Flummery has around her a score of literary gentlemen, who are

bound to her, body and soul : give them a dinner, a smile from an opera-box, a wave of the hand in Rotten Row, and they are hers, neck and heels. *Vides, mi jili*, etc. See, my son, with what a very small dose of humbug men are to be bought. I know many of these individuals : there is my friend M'Lather, an immense, pudgy man : I saw him one day walking through Bond Street in company with an enormous ruby breast-pin. 'Mac!' shouted your humble servant, 'that is a Flummery ruby ;' and Mac hated and cursed us ever after. Presently came little Fitch, the artist : he was rigged out in an illuminated velvet waistcoat—Flummery again—'There's only one like it in town,' whispered Fitch to me confidentially, 'and Flummery has that.' To be sure, Fitch had given, in return, half-a-dozen of the prettiest drawings in the world. 'I wouldn't charge for them, you know,' he says, 'for hang it, Lady Flummery is my friend.' Oh, Fitch, Fitch!

Fifty more instances could be adduced of her ladyship's ways of bribery. She bribes the critics to praise her, and the writers to write for her ; and the public flocks to her as it will to any other tradesman who is properly puffed. Out comes the book ; as for its merits, we may allow, cheerfully, that Lady Flummery has no lack of that natural *esprit* which every woman possesses ; but here praise stops. For the style, she does not know her own language, but, in revenge, has a smattering of half-a-dozen others. She interlards her works with fearful quotations from the French, fiddle-faddle extracts from Italian operas, German phrases fiercely mutilated, and a scrap or two of bad Spanish : and, upon the strength of these murders, she calls herself an authoress. To be sure there is no such word as authoress. If any young nobleman or gentleman of Eton College, when called upon to indite a copy of verses in praise of Sappho, or the Countess of Dash, or Lady Charlotte What-d'ye-call-'em, or the Honourable Mrs. Somebody, should fondly imagine that he might apply to those fair creatures the title of *auctrix*—I pity that young nobleman's or gentleman's case. Doctor Wordsworth and assistants would swish that error out of him in a way that need not here be mentioned. Remember it henceforth, ye writeresses—there is no such word as authoress. *Auctor*, madam, is the word. '*Optima tu proprii nominis auctor eris ;*' which, of course, means that you are, by your proper name, an author, not an authoress : the line is in Ainsworth's Dictionary, where anybody may see it.

This point is settled then ; there is no such word as authoress. But what of that ? Are authoresses to be bound by the rules of grammar ? The supposition is absurd. We don't expect them to know their own language ; we prefer rather the little graceful

pranks and liberties they take with it. When, for instance, a celebrated authoress, who wrote a *Diaress*, calls somebody the prototype of his own father, we feel an obligation to her ladyship; the language feels an obligation; it has a charm and a privilege with which it was never before endowed; and it is manifest, that if we can call ourselves antetypes of our grandmothers—can prophesy what we had for dinner yesterday, and so on, we get into a new range of thought, and discover sweet regions of fancy and poetry, of which the mind hath never even had a notion until now.

It may be then considered as certain that an authoress *ought* not to know her own tongue. Literature and politics have this privilege in common, that any ignoramus may excel in both. No apprenticeship is required, that is certain; and if any gentleman doubts, let us refer him to the popular works of the present day, where, if he find a particle of scholarship, or any acquaintance with any books in any language, or if he be disgusted by any absurd, stiff, old-fashioned notions of grammatical propriety, we are ready to send him back his subscription. A friend of ours came to us the other day in great trouble. His dear little boy, who had been for some months *attaché* to the stables of Mr. Tilbury's establishment, took a fancy to the corduroy-breeches of some other gentleman employed in the same emporium—appropriated them, and afterwards disposed of them for a trifling sum to a relation—I believe his uncle. For this harmless freak, poor Sam was absolutely seized, tried at Clerkenwell Sessions, and condemned to six months' useless rotatory labour at the House of Correction. 'The poor fellow was bad enough before, sir,' said his father, confiding in our philanthropy; 'he picked up such a deal of slang among the stable-boys: but if you could hear him since he came from the mill! he knocks you down with it, sir. I am afraid, sir, of his becoming a regular prig; for though he's a 'cute chap, can read and write, and is mighty smart and handy, yet no one will take him into service on account of that business of the breeches!'

'What, sir!' exclaimed we, amazed at the man's simplicity; '*such* a son, and you don't know what to do with him! a 'cute fellow, who can write, who has been educated in a stable-yard, and has had six months' polish in a university—I mean a prison—and you don't know what to do with him? Make a *fashionable novelist* of him, and be hanged to you!' And proud am I to say that that young man, every evening, after he comes home from his work (he has taken to street-sweeping in the day, and I don't advise him to relinquish a certainty)—proud am I to say that he



devotes every evening to literary composition, and is coming out with a novel, in numbers, of the most fashionable kind.

This little episode is only given for the sake of example; *par exemple*, as our authoress would say, who delights in French of the very worst kind. The public likes only the extremes of society, and votes mediocrity vulgar. From the Author they will take nothing but Fleet Ditch: from the Authoress, only the very finest of rose-water. I have read so many of her ladyship's novels, that, egad! now I don't care for anything under a marquis. Why the deuce should we listen to the intrigues, the misfortunes, the virtues, and conversations of a couple of countesses, for instance, when we can have duchesses for our money? What's a baronet? pish! pish! that great coarse red fist in his scutcheon turns me sick! What's a baron? a fellow with only one more ball than a pawnbroker; and, upon my conscience, just as common. Dear Lady Flummery, in your next novel, give us no more of these low people; nothing under strawberry leaves, for the mercy of Heaven! Suppose, now, you write us

ALBERT;

OR,

WHISPERINGS AT WINDSOR.

BY THE LADY FRANCES FLUMMERY.

There is a subject—fashionable circles, curious revelations, exclusive excitement, etc. To be sure, you *must* here introduce a viscount, and that is sadly vulgar; but we will pass him for the sake of the ministerial *portefeuille*, which is genteel. Then you might do *Leopold*; or, *The Bride of Newilly*; *The Victim of Würtemberg*; *Olga*; or, *The Autocrat's Daughter* (a capital title); *Henri*; or, *Rome in the Nineteenth Century*; we can fancy the book, and a sweet paragraph about it in Timson's paper.

HENRI, by Lady Frances Flummery.—Henri! Who can he be? A little bird whispers in our ear, that the gifted and talented Sappho of our hemisphere has discovered some curious particulars in the life of *a certain young chevalier*, whose appearance at Rome has so frightened the court of the Tu-l-ries. Henri de B-rd—ux is of an age when the *young god* can shoot his darts into the bosom with fatal accuracy; and if the Marchesina degli Spinachi (whose portrait our lovely authoress has sung with a *kindred hand*) be as beauteous as she is represented (and as all who have visited in the exclusive circles of the Eternal City say she is), no wonder at her effect upon the Pr-nce. *Verbum sap.* We hear

that a few copies are still remaining. The enterprising publishers, Messrs. Soap and Diddle, have announced, we see, several other works by the same accomplished pen.

This paragraph makes its appearance, in small type, in the \* \* \*, by the side, perhaps, of a disinterested recommendation of bears'-grease, or some remarks on the extraordinary cheapness of plate in Cornhill. Well, two or three days after, my dear Timson, who has been asked to dinner, writes, in his own hand, and causes to be printed in the largest type, an article to the following effect :—

HENRI.

BY LADY F. FLUMMERY.

This is another of the graceful evergreens which the fair fingers of Lady Fanny Flummery are continually strewing upon our path. At once profound and caustic, truthful and passionate, we are at a loss whether most to admire the manly grandeur of her ladyship's mind, or the exquisite nymph-like delicacy of it. Strange power of fancy ! Sweet enchantress, that rules the mind at will : stirring up the utmost depths of it into passion and storm, or wreathing and dimpling its calm surface with countless summer smiles (as a great Bard of old Time has expressed it) ; what do we not owe to woman ?

What do we not owe her ? More love, more happiness, more calm of vexed spirit, more truthful aid, and pleasant counsel ; in joy, more delicate sympathy ; in sorrow, more kind companionship. We look into her cheery eyes, and, in those wells of love, care drowns ; we listen to her siren voice, and, in that balmy music, banished hopes come winging to the breast again.

This goes on for about three-quarters of a column : I don't pretend to understand it ; but with flowers, angels, Wordsworth's poems, and the old dramatists, one can never be wrong, I think ; and though I have written the above paragraphs myself, and don't understand a word of them, I can't, upon my conscience, help thinking that they are mighty pretty writing. After, then, that this has gone on for about three-quarters of a column (Timson does it in spare minutes, and fits it to any book that Lady Fanny brings out), he proceeds to particularise, thus :—

The griding excitement which thrills through every fibre of the soul as we peruse these passionate pages, is almost too painful to bear. Nevertheless, one drains the draughts of poesy to the dregs, so deliciously intoxicating is its nature. We defy any man who begins these volumes to quit them ere he has perused each line. The plot may be briefly told as thus :—Henri, an exiled prince of Franconia (it is

easy to understand the flimsy allegory), arrives at Rome, and is presented to the sovereign Pontiff. At a feast, given in his honour at the Vatican, a dancing girl (the loveliest creation that ever issued from poet's brain) is introduced, and exhibits some specimens of her art. The young prince is instantaneously smitten with the charms of the Saltatrice; he breathes into her ear the accents of his love, and is listened to with favour. He has, however, a rival, and a powerful one. The POPE has already cast his eye upon the Apulian maid, and burns with lawless passion. One of the grandest scenes ever writ, occurs between the rivals. The Pope offers to Castanetta every temptation; he will even resign his crown, and marry her: but she refuses. The prince can make no such offers; he cannot wed her: 'The blood of Borbonne,' he says, 'may not be thus misallied.' He determines to avoid her. In despair, she throws herself off the Tarpeian rock; and the Pope becomes a maniac. Such is an outline of this tragic tale.

Besides this fabulous and melancholy part of the narrative, which is unsurpassed, much is written in the gay and sparkling style for which our lovely author is unrivalled. The sketch of the Marchesina degli Spinachi and her lover, the Duca of Di Gammoni, is delicious; and the intrigue between the beautiful Princess Kallsbraten and Count Bouterbrod is exquisitely painted: everybody, of course, knows who these characters are. The discovery of the manner in which Kartoffeln, the Saxon envoy, poisons the princess's dishes, is only a graceful and real repetition of a story which was agitated throughout all the diplomatic circles last year! 'Schinken, the Westphalian,' must not be forgotten; nor 'Olla, the Spanish Spy.' How does Lady Fanny Flummery, poet as she is, possess a sense of the ridiculous and a keenness of perception which would do honour to a Rabelais or a Rochefoucauld? To those who ask this question, we have one reply, and that an example:—Not among women, 'tis true; for till the Lady Fanny came among us, woman never soared so high. Not among women, indeed!—but, in comparing her to that great spirit for whom our veneration is highest and holiest, we offer no dishonour to his shrine:—in saying that he who wrote of Romeo and Desdemona might have drawn Castanetta and Enrico, we utter but the truthful expressions of our hearts; in asserting that so long as SHAKSPEARE lives, so long will FLUMMERY endure; in declaring that he who rules in all hearts and over all spirits and all climes, has found a congenial spirit, we do but justice to Lady Fanny—justice to him who sleeps by Avon!

With which we had better, perhaps, conclude. Our object has been, in descanting upon the Fashionable Authoress, to point out the influence which her writing possesses over society, rather than to criticise her life. The former is quite harmless; and we don't pretend to be curious about the latter. The woman herself is

not so blameable ; it is the silly people who cringe at her feet that do the mischief, and, gulled themselves, gull the most gullible of publics. Think you, O Timson ! that her ladyship asks you for your *beaux yeux* or your wit ? Fool ! you do think so, or try and think so ; and yet you know she loves not you, but the \* \* \* newspaper. Think, little Fitch, in your fine waistcoat, how dearly you have paid for it ! Think, M'Lather, how many smirks, and lies, and columns of good three-halfpence-a-line matter, that big garnet pin has cost you ! The woman laughs at you, man ! you, who fancy that she is smitten with you—laughs at your absurd pretensions, your way of eating fish at dinner, your great hands, your eyes, your whiskers, your coat, and your strange north-country twang. Down with this Delilah ! Avaunt, O Circe ! giver of poisonous feeds ! To your natural haunts, ye gentlemen of the press ! if bachelors, frequent your taverns, and be content. Better is Sally the waiter and the first cut out of the joint, than a dinner of four courses, and humbug therewith. Ye who are married, go to your homes ; dine not with those persons who scorn your wives. Go not forth to parties, that you may act Tom Fool for the amusement of my lord and my lady ; but play your natural follies among your natural friends. Do this for a few years, and the Fashionable Authoress is extinct. O Jove, what a prospect ! She, too, has retreated to her own natural calling, being as much out of place in a book as you, my dear M'Lather, in a drawing-room. Let milliners look up to her ; let Howell and James swear by her ; let simpering dandies caper about her car ; let her write poetry if she likes, but only for the most exclusive circles ; let mantua-makers puff her—but not men : let such things be, and the Fashionable Authoress is no more ! Blessed, blessed thought ! No more fiddle-faddle novels ! no more namby-pamby poetry ! no more fribble *Blossoms of Loveliness* ! When will you arrive, O happy Golden Age ?

## THE ARTISTS.

It is confidently stated that there was once a time when the quarter of Soho was thronged by the fashion of London. Many wide streets are there in the neighbourhood, stretching cheerfully towards Middlesex Hospital in the north, bounded by Dean Street in the west, where the lords and ladies of William's time used to dwell,—till in Queen Anne's time, Bloomsbury put Soho out of fashion, and Great Russell Street became the pink of the mode.

Both these quarters of the town have submitted to the awful rule of Nature, and are now to be seen undergoing the dire process of decay. Fashion has deserted Soho, and left her in her gaunt lonely old age. The houses have a vast, dingy, mouldy, dowager look. No more *beaux*, in mighty periwigs, ride by in gilded clattering coaches; no more lacqueys accompany them, bearing torches, and shouting for precedence. A solitary policeman paces these solitary streets,—the only dandy in the neighbourhood. You hear the milkman yelling his milk with a startling distinctness, and the clack of a servant-girl's pattens sets people a-staring from the windows.

With Bloomsbury we have here nothing to do; but as genteel stock-brokers inhabit the neighbourhood of Regent's Park,—as lawyers have taken possession of Russell Square,—so Artists have seized upon the desolate quarter of Soho. They are to be found in great numbers in Berners Street. Up to the present time, naturalists have never been able to account for this mystery of their residence.—What has a painter to do with Middlesex Hospital? He is to be found in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square. And why? Philosophy cannot tell, any more than why milk is found in a cocoa-nut.

Look at Newman Street. Has earth, in any dismal corner of her great round face, a spot more desperately gloomy? The windows are spotted with wafers, holding up ghastly bills, that tell you the house is 'To Let.' Nobody walks there—not even





SEPIO.

an old-clothesman; the first inhabited house has bars to the windows, and bears the name of 'Ahasuerus, officer to the Sheriff of Middlesex'; and here, above all places, must painters take up their quarters,—day by day must these reckless people pass Ahasuerus's treble gate. There was my poor friend Tom Tickner (who did those sweet things for *The Book of Beauty*). Tom, who could not pay his washerwoman, lived opposite the bailiff's; and could see every miserable debtor or greasy Jew writ-bearer that went in or out of his door. The street begins with a bailiff's, and ends with a hospital. I wonder how men live in it, and are decently cheerful, with this gloomy, double-barrelled moral pushed perpetually into their faces. Here, however, they persist in living, no one knows why;—owls may still be found roosting in Netley Abbey, and a few Arabs are to be seen at the present minute in Palmyra.

The ground-floors of the houses where painters live are mostly make-believe shops, black empty warehouses, containing fabulous goods. There is a sedan-chair opposite a house in Rathbone Place, that I have myself seen every day for forty-three years. The house has commonly a huge india-rubber-coloured door, with a couple of glistening brass plates, and bells. A portrait painter lives on the first floor; a great historical genius inhabits the second. Remark the first floor's middle drawing-room window; it is four feet higher than its two companions, and has taken a fancy to peep into the second-floor front. So much for the outward appearance of their habitations, and for the quarters in which they commonly dwell. They seem to love solitude, and their mighty spirits rejoice in vastness and gloomy ruin.

I don't say a word here about those geniuses who frequent the thoroughfares of the town, and have picture-frames containing a little gallery of miniature peers, beauties, and general officers, in the Quadrant, the passages about St. Martin's Lane, the Strand, and Cheapside. Lord Lyndhurst is to be seen in many of these *gratis* exhibitions—Lord Lyndhurst cribbed from Chalon; Lady Peel, from Sir Thomas; Miss Croker, from the same; *the* Duke, from ditto; an original officer in the Spanish Legion; a colonel or so, of the Bunhill-Row Fencibles; a lady on a yellow sofa, with four children in little caps and blue ribands;—we have all of us seen these pretty pictures, and are aware that our own features may be 'done in this style.' Then there is the man on the chain-pier at Brighton, who pares out your likeness in sticking-plaster; there is Miss Croke, or Miss Runt, who gives lessons in Poonah-painting, japanning, or mezzotinting; Miss Stump, who attends ladies' schools with large chalk heads from

Le Brun or the Cartoons ; Rubbery, who instructs young gentlemen's establishments in pencil ; and Sepio, of the Water-Colour Society, who paints before eight pupils daily, at a guinea an hour, keeping his own drawings for himself.

All these persons, as the most indifferent reader must see, equally belong to the tribe of Artists (the last not more than the first), and in an article like this should be mentioned properly. But though this paper has been extended from eight pages to sixteen,—not sixteen pages,—not a volume would suffice to do justice to the biographies of the persons above mentioned. Think of the superb Sepio, in a light-blue satin cravat, and a light-brown coat, and yellow kids, tripping daintily from Grosvenor Square to Gloucester Place ; a small sugar-loaf boy following, who carries his morocco portfolio. Sepio scents his handkerchief, curls his hair, and wears, on a great coarse fist, a large emerald ring that one of his pupils gave him. He would not smoke a cigar for the world ; he is always to be found at the opera ; and, gods ! how he grins, and waggles his head about, as Lady Flummery nods to him from her box.

He goes to at least six great parties in the season. At the houses where he teaches, he has a faint hope that he is received as an equal, and propitiates scornful footmen by absurd donations of sovereigns. The rogue has plenty of them. He has a stock-broker, and a power of guinea lessons stowed away in the Consols. There are a number of young ladies of genius in the aristocracy, who admire him hugely ; he begs you to contradict the report about him and Lady Smigsmag ; every now and then he gets a present of game from a marquis ; the City ladies die to have lessons of him ; he prances about the park on a high-bred cock-tail, with lacquered boots and enormous high heels ; and he has a mother and sisters somewhere — washerwomen, it is said, in Pimlico.

How different is his fate to that of poor Rubbery, the school drawing-master ! Highgate, Homerton, Putney, Hackney, Hornsey, Turnham Green, are his resorts ; he has a select seminary to attend at every one of these places ; and if, from all these nurseries of youth, he obtains a sufficient number of half-crowns to pay his week's bills, what a happy man is he !

He lives most likely in a third floor in Howland Street, and has commonly five children, who have all a marvellous talent for drawing—all save one, perhaps, that is an idiot, which a poor, sick mother is ever carefully tending. Sepio's great aim and battle in life is to be considered one of the aristocracy ; honest Rubbery would fain be thought a gentleman, too ; but, indeed, he



RUBBERY.

does not know whether he is so or not. Why be a gentleman?—a gentleman Artist does not obtain the wages of a tailor; Rubbery's butcher looks down upon him with a royal scorn; and his wife, poor gentle soul (a clergyman's daughter, who married him in the firm belief that her John would be knighted, and make an immense fortune),—his wife, I say, has many fierce looks to suffer from Mrs. Brisket, and many meek excuses or prayers to proffer, when she cannot pay her bill,—or when, worst of all, she has humbly to beg for a little scrap of meat upon credit, against John's coming home. He has five-and-twenty miles to walk that day, and must have something nourishing when he comes in—he is killing himself, poor fellow, she knows he is: and Miss Crick has promised to pay him his quarter's charge on the very next Saturday. 'Gentlefolks, indeed,' says Mrs. Brisket, 'pretty gentlefolks these, as can't pay for half-a-pound of steak!' Let us thank heaven that the Artist's wife has her meat, however—there is good in that shrill, fat, mottled-faced Mrs. Brisket, after all.

Think of the labours of that poor Rubbery. He was up at four in the morning, and toiled till nine upon a huge damp icy lithographic stone; on which he has drawn the 'Star of the Wave,' or the 'Queen of the Tourney,' or, 'She met him at Almack's,' for Lady Flummery's last new song. This done, at half-past nine he is to be seen striding across Kensington Gardens, to wait upon the before-named Miss Crick, at Lamont House. Transport yourself in imagination to the Misses Kittle's seminary, Potzdam Villa, Upper Homerton, four miles from Shoreditch; and at half-past two, Professor Rubbery is to be seen swinging along towards the gate. Somebody is on the look-out for him: indeed it is his eldest daughter Marianne, who has been pacing the shrubbery, and peering over the green railings this half-hour past. She is with the Misses Kittle on the 'mutual system,' a thousand times more despised than the butchers' and the grocers' daughters, who are educated on the same terms, and whose papas are warm men in Aldgate. Wednesday is the happiest day of Marianne's week: and this the happiest hour of Wednesday. Behold! Professor Rubbery wipes his hot brows and kisses the poor thing, and they go in together out of the rain, and he tells her that the twins are well out of the measles, thank God! and that Tom has just done the Antinous, in a way that must make him quite sure of the Academy prize, and that mother is better of her rheumatism now. He has brought her a letter, in large round hand, from Polly: a famous soldier, drawn by little Frank: and when, after his two hours' lesson, Rubbery is off again, our



dear Marianne cons over the letter and picture a hundred times with soft tearful smiles, and stows them away in an old writing desk, amidst a heap more of precious home relics, wretched trumpery scraps, and baubles, that you and I, madam, would sneer at; but that in the poor child's eyes (and, I think, in the eyes of One who knows how to value widows' mites, and humble sinners' offerings) are better than bank-notes and Pitt diamonds. Oh, kind heaven, that has given these treasures to the poor! Many and many an hour does Marianne lie awake with full eyes, and yearn for that wretched old lodging in Howland Street, where mother and brothers lie sleeping; and, gods! what a *fête* it is, when twice or thrice in the year she comes home.

I forget how many hundred millions of miles, for how many billions of centuries, how many thousands of decillions of angels, peris, houris, demons, afreets, and the like, Mahomet travelled, lived, and counted, during the time that some water was falling from a bucket to the ground; but have we not been wandering most egregiously away from Rubbery, during the minute in which his daughter is changing his shoes, and taking off his reeking mackintosh, in the hall of Potsdam Villa? She thinks him the finest Artist that ever cut an H.B., that's positive: and as a drawing-master, his merits are wonderful; for at the Misses Kittle's annual vacation festival, when the young ladies' drawings are exhibited to their mammas and relatives (Rubbery, attending in a clean shirt, with his wife's large brooch stuck in it, and drinking negus along with the very best);—at the annual festival, I say, it will be found that the sixty-four drawings exhibited, Tintern Abbey, Kenilworth Castle, Horse—from Carl Vernet, Head—from West, or what not (say sixteen of each sort), are the one exactly as good as the other; so that, although Miss Slamcoe gets the prize, there is really no reason why Miss Timson, who is only four years old, should not have it; her design being accurately, stroke for stroke, tree for tree, curl for curl, the same as Miss Slamcoe's, who is eighteen. The fact is, that of these drawings, Rubbery, in the course of the year, has done every single stroke, although the girls, and their parents, are ready to take their affidavits (or as I heard once a great female grammarian say, their *affies davit*) that the drawing-master has never been near the sketches. This is the way with them; but mark!—when young ladies come home, are settled in life, and mammas of families,—can they design so much as a horse, or a dog, or a 'moo-cow,' for little Jack who bawls out for them?—not they! Rubbery's pupils have no more notion of drawing,

any more than Sepio's of painting, when that eminent Artist is away.

Between these two gentlemen, lie a whole class of teachers of drawing, who resemble them more or less. I am ashamed to say that Rubbery takes his pipe in the parlour of a hotel, of which the largest room is devoted to the convenience of poor people, amateurs of British gin; whilst Sepio trips down to the club, and has a pint of the smallest claret: but of course the tastes of men vary; and you find them, simple or presuming, careless or prudent, natural and vulgar, or false and atrociously genteel, in all ranks and stations of life.

As for the other persons mentioned at the beginning of this discourse, viz., the cheap portrait-painter, the portrait-cutter in sticking-plaster, and Miss Croke, the teacher of mezzotint and Poonah-painting,—nothing need be said of them in this place, as we have to speak of matters more important. Only about Miss Croke, or about other professors of cheap art, let the reader most sedulously avoid them. Mezzotinto is a take-in, Poonah-painting a rank, villainous deception. 'So is Grecian art without brush or pencils;' these are only small mechanical contrivances, over which young ladies are made to lose time. And now having disposed of these small skirmishers who hover round the great body of Artists, we are arrived in presence of the main force, that we must begin to attack in form. In the 'partition of the earth,' as it has been described by Schiller, the reader will remember that the poet, finding himself at the end of the general scramble without a single morsel of plunder, applied passionately to Jove, who pitied the poor fellow's condition, and complimented him with a seat in the Empyræan. 'The strong and the cunning,' says Jupiter, 'have seized upon the inheritance of the world, whilst thou wert star-gazing and rhyming: not one single acre remains wherewith I can endow thee; but, in revenge, if thou art disposed to visit me in my own heaven, come when thou wilt; it is always open to thee.'

The cunning and strong have scrambled and struggled more on our own little native spot of earth than in any other place on the world's surface; and the English poet (whether he handles a pen or a pencil) has little other refuge than that windy unsubstantial one which Jove has vouchsafed to him. Such airy board and lodging is, however, distasteful to many; who prefer, therefore, to give up their poetical calling, and, in a vulgar beef-eating world, to feed upon, and fight for, vulgar beef.

For such persons (among the class of painters), it may be asserted that portrait-painting was invented. It is the Artist's

compromise with heaven ; 'the light of common day,' in which, after a certain quantity of 'travel from the East,' the genius fades at last. Abbé Barthélemy (who sent Le Jeune Anacharsis travelling through Greece in the time of Plato,—travelling through ancient Greece in lace ruffles, red heels, and a pigtail),—Abbé Barthélemy, I say, declares that somebody was once standing against a wall in the sun, and that somebody else traced the outline of somebody's shadow ; and so painting was 'invented.' Angelica Kauffmann has made a neat picture of this neat subject ; and very well worthy she was of handling it. Her painting *might* grow out of a wall and a piece of charcoal ; and honest Barthélemy might be satisfied that he had here traced the true origin of the art. What a base pedigree have these abominable Greek, French, and High-Dutch heathens invented for that which is divine ! —a wall, ye gods, to be represented as the father of that which came down radiant from you ! The man who invented such a blasphemy, ought to be impaled upon broken bottles, or shot off pitilessly by spring-guns, nailed to the bricks like a dead owl or a weasel, or tied up—a kind of vulgar Prometheus—and baited for ever by the house-dog.

But let not our indignation carry us too far. Lack of genius in some, of bread in others, of patronage in a shop-keeping world, that thinks only of the useful, and is little inclined to study the sublime, has turned thousands of persons calling themselves, and wishing to be, Artists, into so many common face-painters, who must look out for the 'kalon' in the fat features of a red-gilled Alderman, or, at best, in a pretty, simpering white-necked beauty from Almack's. The dangerous charms of these latter, especially, have seduced away many painters ; and we often think that this very physical superiority which English ladies possess, this tempting brilliancy of health and complexion, which belongs to them more than to any others, has operated upon our Artists as a serious disadvantage, and kept them from better things. The French call such beauty, '*La beauté du Diable*' : and a devilish power it has truly ; before our Armidas and Helens, how many Rinaldos and Parises have fallen, who are content to forget their glorious calling, and slumber away their energies in the laps of these soft tempters. Oh, ye British enchantresses ! I never see a gilded annual-book, without likening it to a small island, near Cape Pelorus, in Sicily, whither, by twanging of harps, singing of ravishing melodies, glancing of voluptuous eyes, and the most beautiful fashionable undress in the world, the naughty sirens lured the passing seaman. Steer clear of them, ye Artists ! pull, pull for your lives, ye crews of Suffolk Street and the Water-Colour Gallery ! stop your ears,

bury your eyes, tie yourselves to the masts, and away with you from the gaudy, smiling 'Books of Beauty.' Land, and you are ruined! Look well among the flowers on yonder beach—it is whitened with the bones of painters.

For my part, I never have a model under seventy, and her with several shawls and a cloak on. By these means, the imagination gets fair play, and the morals remain unendangered.

Personalities are odious; but let the British public look at the pictures of the celebrated Mr. Shalloon—the moral British public—and say whether our grandchildren (or the grandchildren of the exalted personages whom Mr. Shalloon paints) will not have a queer idea of the manners of their grandmammas, as they are represented in the most beautiful, dexterous, captivating water-colour drawings that ever were? Heavenly powers, how they simper and ogle! with what gimcracks of lace, ribbons, *ferrounières*, smelling-bottles, and what not, is every one of them overloaded. What shoulders, what ringlets, what funny little pug-dogs do they, most of them, exhibit to us! The days of Lancret and Watteau are lived over again, and the court ladies of the time of Queen Victoria look as moral as the immaculate countesses of the days of Louis Quinze. The last President of the Royal Academy<sup>1</sup> is answerable for many sins, and many imitators; especially for that gay, simpering, meretricious look which he managed to give to every lady who sat to him for her portrait; and I do not know a more curious contrast, than that which may be perceived by any one who will examine a collection of his portraits, by the side of some by Sir Joshua Reynolds. They seem to have painted different races of people; and when one hears very old gentlemen talking of the superior beauty that existed in their early days (as very old gentlemen, from Nestor downwards, have and will), one is inclined to believe that there is some truth in what they say; at least, that the men and women under George the Third were far superior to their descendants in the time of George the Fourth. Whither has it fled—that calm matronly grace, or beautiful virgin innocence, which belonged to the happy women who sate to Sir Joshua? Sir Thomas's ladies are ogling out of their gilt frames, and asking us for admiration; Sir Joshua's sit quiet, in maiden meditation fancy free, not anxious for applause, but sure to command it; a thousand times more lovely in their sedate serenity than Sir Thomas's ladies in their smiles, and their satin ball-dresses.

But this is not the general notion, and the ladies prefer the manner of the modern Artist. Of course, such being the case, the

<sup>1</sup> [Sir Thomas Lawrence.]

painters must follow the fashion. One could point out half a dozen Artists who, at Sir Thomas's death, have seized upon a shred of his somewhat tawdry mantle. There is Carmine, for instance, a man of no small repute, who will stand as the representative of his class.

Carmine has had the usual education of a painter in this country ; he can read and write—that is, has spent years drawing the figure—and has made his foreign tour. It may be that he had original talent once, but he has learnt to forget this, as the great bar to his success ; and must imitate, in order to live. He is among Artists what a dentist is among surgeons—a man who is employed to decorate the human head, and who is paid enormously for so doing. You know one of Carmine's beauties at any exhibition, and see the process by which they are manufactured. He lengthens the noses, widens the foreheads, opens the eyes, and gives them the proper languishing leer ; diminishes the mouth, and infallibly tips the ends of it with a pretty smile of his favourite colour. He is a personable, white-handed, bald-headed, middle-aged man now, with that grave blandness of look which one sees in so many prosperous empty-headed people. He has a collection of little stories and court gossip about Lady This, and 'my particular friend, Lord So-and-so,' which he lets off in succession to every sitter : indeed, a most bland, irreproachable, gentleman-like man. He gives most patronising advice to young Artists, and makes a point of praising all—not certainly too much, but in a gentleman-like, indifferent, simpering way. This should be the maxim with prosperous persons, who have had to make their way, and wish to keep what they have made. They praise everybody, and are called good-natured, benevolent men. Surely no benevolence is so easy ; it simply consists in lying, and smiling, and wishing everybody well. You will get to do so quite naturally at last, and at no expense of truth. At first, when a man has feelings of his own—feelings of love or of anger—this perpetual grin and good-humour is hard to maintain. I used to imagine, when I first knew Carmine, that there were some particular springs in his wig (that glossy, oily, curly crop of chestnut hair) that pulled up his features into a smile, and kept the muscles so fixed for the day. I don't think so now, and should say he grinned, even when he was asleep and his teeth were out ; the smile does not lie in the manufacture of the wig, but in the construction of the brain. Claude Carmine has the organ of *don't-care-a-damnateness* wonderfully developed ; not that reckless don't-care-a-damnateness which leads a man to disregard all the world, and himself into the bargain. Claude stops before he comes to himself ; but



beyond that individual member of the Royal Academy, has not a single sympathy for a single human creature. The account of his friends' deaths, woes, misfortune, or good luck, he receives with equal good-nature; he gives three splendid dinners per annum, Gunter, Dukes, Fortnum and Mason, everything; he dines out the other three hundred and sixty-two days in the year, and was never known to give away a shilling, or to advance, for one half-hour, the forty pounds per quarter wages that he gives to Mr. Scumble, who works the backgrounds, limbs, and draperies of his portraits.

He is not a good painter: how should he be; whose painting as it were never goes beyond a whisper, and who would make a general simpering as he looked at an advancing cannon-ball?—but he is not a bad painter, being a keen, respectable man of the world, who has a cool head, and knows what is what. In France, where tigerism used to be the fashion among the painters, I make no doubt Carmine would have let his beard and wig grow, and looked the fiercest of the fierce; but with us, a man must be genteel; the perfection of style (in writing and in drawing-rooms) being '*de ne pas en avoir*,' Carmine of course is agreeably vapid. His conversation has accordingly the flavour and briskness of a clear, brilliant, stale bottle of soda-water,—once in five minutes or so, you see rising up to the surface a little bubble—a little tiny shining point of wit,—it rises and explodes feebly, and then dies. With regard to wit, people of fashion (as we are given to understand) are satisfied with a mere *soupeçon* of it. Anything more were indecorous; a genteel stomach could not bear it: Carmine knows the exact proportions of the dose, and would not venture to administer to his sitters anything beyond the requisite quantity.

There is a great deal more said here about Carmine—the man, than Carmine—the Artist; but what can be written about the latter? New ladies in white satin, new generals in red, new peers in scarlet and ermine, and stout members of Parliament pointing to ink-stands and sheets of letter-paper, with a Turkey-carpet beneath them, a red curtain above them, a Doric pillar supporting them, and a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning lowering and flashing in the background, spring up every year, and take their due positions 'upon the line' in the Academy, and send their complements of hundreds to swell Carmine's heap of Consols. If he paints Lady Flummery, for the tenth time, in the character of the tenth Muse, what need have we to say anything about it? The man is a good workman, and will manufacture a decent article at the best price; but we should no more think of noticing each, than of writing fresh critiques upon every new coat that Nugee or Stultz turned out. The papers say, in reference to his picture,

'No. 591. "Full-length portrait of her Grace the Duchess of Doldrum. Carmine, R.A." Mr. Carmine never fails; this work, like all others by the same Artist, is excellent:'—or, 'No. 591, etc. The lovely Duchess of Doldrum has received from Mr. Carmine's pencil ample justice; the *chiaroscuro* of the picture is perfect; the likeness admirable; the keeping and colouring have the true Titianesque gusto; if we might hint a fault, it has the left ear of the lap-dog a "little" out of drawing.'

Then, perhaps, comes a criticism which says:—'The Duchess of Doldrum's picture by Mr. Carmine is neither better nor worse than five hundred other performances of the same artist. It would be very unjust to say that these portraits are bad, for they have really a considerable cleverness; but to say that they were good, would be quite as false: nothing in our eyes was ever further from being so. Every ten years Mr. Carmine exhibits what is called an original picture of three inches square; but beyond this, nothing original is to be found in him: as a lad, he copied Reynolds, then Opie, then Lawrence; then having made a sort of style of his own, he has copied himself ever since,' etc.

And then the critic goes on to consider the various parts of Carmine's pictures. In speaking of critics, their peculiar relationship with painters ought not to be forgotten; and as in a former paper we have seen how a fashionable authoress has her critical toadies, in like manner has the painter his enemies and friends in the press; with this difference, probably, that the writer can bear a fair quantity of abuse without wincing, while the artist not uncommonly grows mad at such strictures, considers them as personal matters, inspired by a private feeling of hostility, and hates the critic for life who has ventured to question his judgment in any way. We have said before, poor Academicians, for how many conspiracies are you made to answer! We may add now, poor critics, what black personal animosities are discovered for you, when you happen (right or wrong, but according to your best ideas) to speak the truth! Say that Snooks's picture is badly coloured.—'Oh, heavens!' shrieks Snooks, 'what can I have done to offend this fellow?' Hint that such a figure is badly drawn—and Snooks instantly declares you to be his personal enemy, actuated only by envy and vile pique. My friend Pebbler, himself a famous Artist, is of opinion that the critic should *never* abuse the painter's performances, because, says he, the painter knows much better than any one else what his own faults are, and because you never do him any good. Are men of the brush so obstinate?—very likely: but the public—the public? are we not to do our duty by it too? and, aided by our superior knowledge and genius for the

fine arts, point out to it the way it should go? Yes, surely; and as by the efforts of dull or interested critics many bad painters have been palmed off upon the nation as geniuses of the first degree; in like manner, the sagacious and disinterested (like some we could name) have endeavoured to provide this British nation with pure principles of taste,—or at least, to prevent them from adopting such as are impure.

Carmine, to be sure, comes in for very little abuse; and, indeed, he deserves but little. He is a fashionable painter, and preserves the golden mediocrity which is necessary for the fashion. Let us bid him good-bye. He lives in a house all to himself, most likely,—has a footman, sometimes a carriage; is apt to belong to the Athenæum; and dies universally respected; that is, not one single soul cares for him dead, as he, living, did not care for one single soul.

Then, perhaps, we should mention M'Gilp, or Blather, rising young men, who will fill Carmine's place one of these days, and occupy his house in——, when the fulness of time shall come, and (he borne to a narrow grave in the Harrow Road by the whole mourning Royal Academy) they shall leave their present first-floor in Newman Street, and step into his very house and shoes.

There is little difference between the juniors and the seniors; they grin when they are talking of him together, and express a perfect confidence that they can paint a head against Carmine any day—as very likely they can. But until his demise, they are occupied with painting people about the Regent's Park and Russell Square; are very glad to have the chance of a popular clergyman, or a college tutor, or a mayor of Stoke Poges after the Reform Bill. Such characters are commonly mezzotinted afterwards; and the portrait of our esteemed townsman So-and-so, by that talented artist Mr. M'Gilp, of London, is favourably noticed by the provincial press, and is to be found over the sideboards of many country gentlemen. If they come up to town, to whom do they go? To M'Gilp, to be sure; and thus, slowly, his practice and his prices increase.

The Academy student is a personage that should not be omitted here: he resembles very much, outwardly, the medical student, and has many of the latter's habits, and pleasures. He very often wears a broad-brimmed hat, and a fine dirty crimson velvet waistcoat, his hair commonly grows long, and he has braiding to his pantaloons. He works leisurely at the Academy, he loves theatres, billiards, and novels, and has his house-of-call somewhere in the neighbourhood of Saint Martin's Lane, where he and his brethren meet and sneer at Royal Academicians. If you ask him what line of art he pursues, he answers, with a smile exceedingly

supercilious, 'Sir, I am an historical painter;' meaning that he will only condescend to take subjects from Hume, or Robertson, or from the classics—which he knows nothing about. This stage of an historical painter is only preparatory, lasting perhaps from eighteen to five-and-twenty, when the gentleman's madness begins to disappear, and he comes to look at life sternly in the face, and to learn that man shall not live by historical painting alone. Then our friend falls to portrait-painting, or animal-painting, or makes some other such sad compromise with necessity.

He has probably a small patrimony, which defrays the charge of his studies and cheap pleasures during his period of apprenticeship. He makes the *obligé* tour to France and Italy, and returns from those countries with a multitude of spoiled canvases, and a large pair of mustachios, with which he establishes himself in one of the dingy streets of Soho before mentioned. There is poor Pipson, a man of indomitable patience, and undying enthusiasm for his profession. He could paper Exeter Hall with his studies from the life, and with portraits in chalk and oil of French *sapeurs* and Italian brigands, that kindly descend from their mountain-caverns, and quit their murderous occupations, in order to sit to young gentlemen at Rome, at the rate of tenpence an hour. Pipson returns from abroad, establishes himself, has his cards printed, and waits and waits for commissions for great historical pictures. Meanwhile, night after night, he is to be found at his old place in the Academy, copying the old life-guardsmen—working, working away—and never advancing one jot. At eighteen, Pipson copied statues and life-guardsmen to admiration; at five-and-thirty he can make admirable drawings of life-guardsmen and statues. Beyond this he never goes;—year after year his historical picture is returned to him by the envious Academicians, and he grows old, and his little patrimony is long since spent; and he earns nothing himself. How does he support hope and life?—that is the wonder. No one knows until he tries (which God forbid he should!) upon what a small matter hope and life can be supported. Our poor fellow lives on from year to year in a miraculous way; tolerably cheerful in the midst of his semi-starvation, and wonderfully confident about next year, in spite of the failures of the last twenty-five. Let us thank God for imparting to us poor, weak mortals the inestimable blessing of *vanity*. How many half-witted votaries of the arts, poets, painters, actors, musicians, live upon this food, and scarcely any other! If the delusion were to drop from Pipson's eyes, and he should see himself as he is, — if some malevolent genius were to mingle with his feeble brains one fatal particle of common sense,—he would just walk off Waterloo

Bridge, and abjure poverty, incapacity, cold lodgings, unpaid bakers' bills, ragged elbows, and deferred hopes, at once and for ever.

We do not mean to depreciate the profession of historical painting, but simply to warn youth against it as dangerous and unprofitable. It is as if a young fellow should say, 'I will be a Raphael or a Titian, —a Milton or a Shakspeare;' and if he will count up how many people have lived since the world began, and how many there have been of the Raphael or Shakspeare sort, he can calculate to a nicety what are the chances in his favour. Even successful historical painters, what are they?—in a worldly point of view, they mostly inhabit the second floor, or have great desolate studios in back premises, whither life-guardsmen, old-clothesmen, blackamoors, and other 'properties' are conducted to figure at full length as Roman conquerors, Jewish high-priests, or Othellos on canvas. Then there are gay, smart, water-colour painters, —a flourishing and pleasant trade. Then there are shabby, fierce-looking geniuses, in ringlets, and all but rags, who paint, and whose pictures are never sold, and who vow they are the objects of some general and scoundrelly conspiracy. There are landscape-painters, who travel to the uttermost ends of the earth, and brave heat and cold, to bring to the greedy British public views of Cairo, Calcutta, St. Petersburg, Timbuctoo. You see English artists under the shadow of the Pyramids, making sketches of the Copts, perched on the backs of dromedaries, accompanying a caravan across the desert, or getting materials for an annual in Iceland or Siberia. What genius and what energy do not they all exhibit—these men, whose profession, in this wise country of ours, is scarcely considered as liberal!

If we read the works of the Reverend Dr. Lempriere, Monsieur Wickelmann, Professor Plato, and others who have written concerning the musty old Grecians, we shall find that the Artists of those barbarous times meddled with all sorts of trades besides their own, and dabbled in fighting, philosophy, metaphysics, both Scotch and German, politics, music, and the deuce knows what. A rambling sculptor, who used to go about giving lectures in those days, Socrates by name, declared that the wisest of men in his time were Artists. This Plato, before mentioned, went through a regular course of drawing, figure and landscape, black-lead, chalk, with or without stump, sepia, water-colour, and oils. Was there ever such absurdity known? Among these benighted heathens, painters were the most accomplished gentlemen,—and the most accomplished gentlemen were painters; the former would make you a speech, or read you a dissertation on Kant, or lead you a regiment,—with the very best statesman, philosopher,



or soldier in Athens. And they had the folly to say, that by thus busying and accomplishing themselves in all manly studies, they were advancing eminently in their own peculiar one. What was the consequence? Why, that fellow Socrates not only made a miserable fifth-rate sculptor, but was actually hanged for treason.

And serve him right. Do *our* young artists study anything beyond the proper way of cutting a pencil, or drawing a model? Do you hear of *them* hard at work over books, and bothering their brains with musty learning? Not they, forsooth: we understand the doctrine of division of labour, and each man sticks to his trade. Artists do not meddle with the pursuits of the rest of the world; and, in revenge, the rest of the world does not meddle with Artists. Fancy an Artist being a senior wrangler, or a politician; and, on the other hand, fancy a real gentleman turned painter! No, no; ranks are defined. A real gentleman may get money by the law, or by wearing a red coat and fighting, or a black one and preaching; but that he should sell himself to *Art*—forbid it, heaven! And do not let your ladyship on reading this cry, ‘Stuff!—stupid envy, rank republicanism,—an Artist *is* a gentleman.’ Madam, would you like to see your son, the Honourable Fitzroy Plantagenet, a painter? You would die sooner; the escutcheon of the Smigsmags would be blotted for ever, if Plantagenet ever ventured to make a mercantile use of a bladder of paint.

Time was—some hundred years back—when writers lived in Grub Street, and poor ragged Johnson shrunk behind a screen in Cave’s parlour—that the author’s trade was considered a very mean one, which a gentleman of family could not take up but as an amateur. This absurdity is pretty nearly worn out now, and I do humbly hope and pray for the day when the other shall likewise disappear. If there be any nobleman with a talent that way, why—why don’t we see him among the R.A.’s?

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|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| 501. The Schoolmaster. Sketch     | { | Brum, Henry, Lord, <i>R.A.</i> ,                             |
| taken abroad . . . . .            |   | <i>F.R.S., S.A. of the National<br/>Institute of France.</i> |
| 502. View of the Artist’s Resi-   | { | Maconkey, Right Honourable                                   |
| dence at Windsor . . . . .        |   | T. B.  |
| 503. Murder of the Babes in the   | { | Rustle, Lord J.  |
| Tower . . . . .                   |   | Pill, Right Honourable Sir                                   |
|                                   |   | Robert.  |
| 504. A Little Agitation . . . . . |   | O’Carroll, Daniel, M.R.I.A.                                  |

Fancy, I say, such names as these figuring in the catalogue of the Academy: and why should they not? The real glorious

days of the art (which wants equality and not patronage) will revive then. Patronage—a plague on the word!—it implies inferiority; and in the name of all that is sensible, why is a respectable country gentleman, or a city attorney's lady, or any person of any rank, however exalted, to 'patronise' an Artist?

There are some who sigh for the past times, when magnificent, swaggering Peter Paul Rubens (who himself patronised a queen) rode abroad with a score of gentlemen in his train, and a purse-bearer to scatter ducats; and who love to think how he was made an English knight and a Spanish grandee, and went of embassies as if he had been a born marquis. Sweet it is to remember, too, that Sir Antony Vandyck, K.B., actually married out of the peerage; and that when Titian dropped his mahlstick, the Emperor Charles V. picked it up (Oh, gods! what heroic self-devotion),—picked it up, saying, 'I can make fifty dukes, but not one Titian.' Nay, was not the Pope of Rome going to make Raphael a Cardinal,—and were not these golden days?

Let us say at once, 'No.' The very fuss made about certain painters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries shows that the body of Artists had no rank or position in the world. They hung upon single patrons; and every man who holds his place by such a tenure, must feel himself an inferior, more or less. The times are changing now, and as authors are no longer compelled to send their works abroad under the guardianship of a great man and a slavish dedication, painters, too, are beginning to deal directly with the public. Who are the great picture-buyers now?—the engravers and their employers, the people,—'the only source of legitimate power,' as they say after dinner. A fig then for Cardinals' hats! were Mr. O'Connell in power to-morrow, let us hope he would not give one, not even a paltry bishopric *in partibus*, to the best painter in the Academy. What need have they of honours out of the profession? Why are they to be be-knighted like a parcel of aldermen?—for my part, I solemnly declare, that I will take nothing under a peerage, after the exhibition of my great picture, and don't see, if painters *must* have titles conferred upon them for eminent services, why the Marquis of Mulready or the Earl of Landseer should not sit in the House as well as any law or soldier lord.

The truth to be elicited from this little digressive dissertation is this painful one,—that young Artists are not generally as well instructed as they should be; and let the Royal Academy look to it, and give some sound courses of lectures to their pupils on literature and history, as well as on anatomy, or light and shade.

STORIES AND SKETCHES



# THE PROFESSOR.

## A TALE OF SENTIMENT.

‘Why, then, the World’s mine oyster.’

### CHAPTER I.

I HAVE often remarked that, among other ornaments and curiosities, Hackney contains more ladies’ schools than are to be found in almost any other village, or indeed city, in Europe. In every green rustic lane, to every tall old-fashioned house there is an iron gate, an ensign of blue and gold, and a large brass plate, proclaiming that a ladies’ seminary is established upon the premises. On one of these plates is written—(or rather was,—for the pathetic occurrence which I have to relate took place many years ago)—on one of these plates, I say, was engraven the following inscription:—

#### ‘BULGARIA HOUSE.

Seminary for Young Ladies from three to twenty.

BY THE MISSES PIDGE.

(Please wipe your shoes.)’

The Misses Pidge took a limited number of young ladies (as limited, in fact, or as large as the public chose), and instructed them in those branches of elegant and useful learning which make the British female so superior to all other shes. The younger ones learned the principles of back-stitch, cross-stitch, bob-stitch, Doctor Watts’s Hymns, and ‘In my Cottage near a Wood.’ The elder pupils diverged at once from stitching and samplers: they played like Thalberg, and pirouetted like Taglioni; they learned geography, geology, mythology, entomology, modern history, and simple equations (Miss Z. Pidge); they obtained a complete knowledge of the

<sup>1</sup> [*Bentley’s Miscellany*, July, 1837.]



French, German, and Italian tongues, not including English, taught by Miss Pidge; Poonah painting and tambour (Miss E. Pidge); Brice's questions and elocution (Miss F. Pidge); and, to crown all, dancing and gymnastics (which had a very flourishing look in the Pidge prospectus, and were printed in German text), DANCING and GYMNASTICS, we say, by Professor DANDOLO. The names of other professors and assistants followed in modester type.

Although the Signor's name was decidedly foreign, so English was his appearance, and so entirely did he disguise his accent, that it was impossible to tell of what place he was a native, if not of London, and of the very heart of it; for he had caught completely the peculiarities which distinguish the so-called cockney part of the City, and obliterated his *h*'s and doubled his *v*'s, as if he had been for all his life in the neighbourhood of Bow bells. Signor Dandolo was a stout gentleman of five feet nine, with amazing expanse of mouth, chest, and whiskers, which latter were of a red hue.

I cannot tell how this individual first received an introduction to the academy of the Misses Pidge, and established himself there. Rumours say that Miss Zela Pidge at a Hackney ball first met him, and thus the intimacy arose: but, since the circumstances took place which I am about to relate, that young lady declares that *she* was not the person who brought him to Bulgaria House,—nothing but the infatuation and entreaties of Mrs. Alderman Grampus could ever have induced her to receive him. The reader will gather from this, that Dandolo's after-conduct at Miss Pidge's was not satisfactory,—nor was it; and may every mistress of such an establishment remember that confidence can be sometimes misplaced; that friendship is frequently but another name for villainy.

But to our story. The stalwart and active Dandolo delighted for some time the young ladies at Miss Pidge's by the agility which he displayed in the dance, as well as the strength and manliness of his form, as exhibited in the new amusement which he taught. In a very short time, Miss Binx, a stout young lady of seventeen, who had never until his appearance walked half a mile without puffing like an apoplectic Lord Mayor, could dance the cachuca, swarm up a pole with the agility of a cat, and hold out a chair for three minutes without winking. Miss Jacobs could very nearly climb through a ladder (Jacob's ladder, he profanely called it); and Miss Bole ring such changes upon the dumb-bells as might have been heard at Edmonton, if the bells could have spoken. But the most promising pupil of Professor Dandolo, as indeed the fairest young creature in the establishment of Bulgaria House, was

Miss Adeliza Grampus, daughter of the alderman whose name we have mentioned. The pride of her mother, the idol of her opulent father, Adeliza Grampus was in her nineteenth year. Eyes have often been described; but it would require bluer ink than ours to depict the orbs of Adeliza. The snow when it first falls in Cheapside is not whiter than her neck,—when it has been for some days upon the ground, trampled by dustmen and jarvies, trodden down by sweeps and gentlemen going to business, not blacker than her hair. Slim as the Monument on Fish Street Hill, her form was slender and tall; but it is needless to recapitulate her charms, and difficult indeed to describe them. Let the reader think of his first love, and fancy Adeliza. Dandolo, who was employed to instruct her, saw her, and fancied her too, as many a fellow of his inflammable temperament would have done in his place.

There are few situations in life which can be so improved by an enterprising mind as that of a dancing-master,—I mean in a tender or amatory point of view. The dancing-master has over the back, the hands, the feet and shoulders of his pupils an absolute command; and, being by nature endowed with so much authority, can speedily spread his way from the limbs to the rest of the body, and to the mind inclusive. ‘*Toes a little more out, Miss Adeliza,*’ cries he, with the tenderest air in the world: ‘back a *little more straight,*’ and he gently seizes her hand, he raises it considerably above the level of her ear, he places the tips of his left-hand fingers gently upon the young lady’s spine, and in this seducing attitude gazes tenderly into her eyes! I say that no woman at any age can stand this attitude and this look, especially when darted from such eyes as those of Dandolo. On the two first occasions when the adventurer attempted this audacious manœuvre, his victim blushed only, and trembled; on the third, she dropped her full eyelids and turned ghastly pale. ‘A glass of water,’ cried Adeliza, ‘or I faint.’ The dancing-master hastened eagerly away to procure the desired beverage, and, as he put it to her lips, whispered thrillingly in her ear, ‘Thine, thine for ever, Adeliza!’

Miss Grampus sank back in the arms of Miss Binx, but not before her raptured lover saw her eyes turning towards the ceiling, and her clammy lips whispering the name of ‘Dandolo.’

When Madame Schroeder, in the opera of *Fidelio*, cries, ‘Nichts, nichts, mein Florestan,’ it is as nothing compared to the tenderness with which Miss Grampus uttered that soft name.

‘Dandolo!’ would she repeat to her confidante, Miss Binx; ‘the name was beautiful and glorious in the olden days; five hundred years since, a myriad of voices shouted it in Venice, when

one who bore it came forward to wed the sea—the doge's bride! the blue Adriatic! the boundless and eternal main! The frightened Turk shrank palsied at the sound: it was louder than the loudest of the cannon, or the stormy screaming of the tempest! Dandolo! How many brave hearts beat to hear that name! how many bright swords flashed forth at that resistless war-cry! Oh, Binx!' would Adeliza continue, fondly pressing the arm of that young lady, 'is it not passing strange that one of that mighty ducal race should have lived to this day, and lived to love *me*? But I, too,' Adeliza would add archly, 'am, as you know, a daughter of the sea.'

The fact was, that the father of Miss Adeliza Grampus was a shellfish-monger, which induced the young lady to describe herself as a daughter of Occan. She received her romantic name from her mother, after reading Miss Swipes's celebrated novel of *Toby of Warsaw*; and had been fed from her youth upwards with so much similar literary ware, that her little mind had gone distracted. Her father had sent her from home at fifteen, because she had fallen in love with the young man who opened natives in the shop, and had vowed to slay herself with the oyster-knife. At Miss Pidge's her sentiment had not deserted her; she knew all Miss Landon by heart, had a lock of Mr. Thomas Moore's hair or wig, and read more novels and poetry than ever. And thus the red-haired dancing-master became in her eyes a Venetian nobleman, with whom it was her pride and pleasure to fall in love.

Being a parlour-boarder at Miss Pidge's seminary (a privilege which was acquired by paying five annual guineas extra), Miss Grampus was permitted certain liberties which were not accorded to scholars of the ordinary description. She and Miss Binx occasionally strolled into the village by themselves; they visited the library unattended; they went upon little messages for the Misses Pidge; they walked to church alone, either before or after the long row of young virgins who streamed out on every Sabbath day from between the filigree iron railings of Bulgaria House. It is my painful duty to state, that on several of these exclusive walks they were followed, or met, by the insidious and attentive teacher of gymnastics.

Soon Miss Binx would lag behind, and—shall I own it?—would make up for the lost society of her female friend by the company of a man, a friend of the Professor, mysterious and agreeable as himself. May the mistresses of all the establishments for young ladies in this kingdom, or queendom rather, peruse this, and reflect how dangerous it is for young ladies of any age—ay, even for parlour-boarders,—to go out alone! In the present instance

Miss Grampus enjoyed a more than ordinary liberty, it is true : when the elder Miss Pidge would remonstrate, Miss Zela would anxiously yield to her request ; and why ?—the reason may be gathered from the following conversation which passed between the infatuated girl and the wily *maitre-de-danse*.

‘How, Roderick,’ would Adeliza say, ‘how, in the days of our first acquaintance, did it chance that you always addressed yourself to that odious Zela Pidge, and never deigned to breathe a syllable to me?’

‘My lips didn’t speak to you, Addly’ (for to such a pitch of familiarity had they arrived), ‘but my heyes did.’

Adeliza was not astonished by the peculiarity of his pronunciation, for, to say truth, it was that commonly adopted in her native home and circle. ‘And mine,’ said she, tenderly, ‘they followed when yours were not fixed upon them, for *then* I dared not look upwards. And though all on account of Miss Pidge you could not hear the accents of my voice, you might have heard the beatings of my heart!’

‘I did, I did,’ gasped Roderick ; ‘I ’eard them haudibly. I never spoke to you then, for I feared to waken that foul friend sispicion. I wished to henter your seminary, to be continually near you, to make you love me ; therefore I wooed the easy and foolish Miss Pidge, therefore I took upon me the disguise of—ha ! ha !—of a dancing-master.’ (And the young man’s countenance assumed a grim and demoniac smile.) ‘Yes ; I degraded my name and my birthright,—I wore these ignoble trappings, and all for the love of thee, my Adeliza !’ Here Signor Dandolo would have knelt down, but the road was muddy ; and his trousers being of nankeen, his gallant purpose was frustrated.

But the story must out, for the conversation above narrated has betrayed to the intelligent reader a considerable part of it. The fact is, as we have said, that Miss Zela Pidge, dancing at the Hackney assembly, was introduced to this man ; that he had no profession,—no means even of subsistence ; that he saw enough of this lady to be aware that he could make her useful to his purpose ; and he who had been, we believe it in our conscience, no better than a travelling mountebank or harlequin, appeared at Bulgaria House in the character of a professor of gymnastics. The governess, in the first instance, entertained for him just such a *penchant* as the pupil afterwards felt : the latter discovered the weakness of her mistress, and hence arose Miss Pidge’s indulgence, and Miss Grampus’s fatal passion.

‘Mysterious being !’ continued Adeliza, resuming the conversation which has been broken by the above explanatory hints, ‘how

did I learn to love thee? Who art thou?—what dire fate has brought thee hither in this lowly guise to win the heart of Adeliza?’

‘Hadeliza,’ cried he, ‘you say well; *I am not what I seem*. I cannot tell thee what I am; a tale of horror, of crime, forbids the dreadful confession! But dark as I am, and wretched, nay, wicked and desperate, I love thee, Hadeliza,—love thee with the rapturous devotion of purer days—the tenderness of happier times! I am sad now, and fallen, lady; suffice it that I once was happy, ay, respectable.’

Adeliza’s cheek grew deadly pale, her step faltered, and she would have fallen to the ground, had she not been restrained by the strong arm of her lover. ‘I know not,’ said she, as she clung timidly to his neck,—

“‘I know not, I hask not, if guilt’s in that art,  
I know that I love thee, whatever thou hart.’”

‘*Gilt* in my heart,’ said Dandolo, ‘*gilt* in the heart of Roderick? No, never!’ and he drew her towards him, and on her bonnet, her veil, her gloves, nay, on her very cheeks, he imprinted a thousand maddening kisses. ‘But say, my sweet one,’ continued he, ‘who art *thou*? I know you as yet only by your lovely baptismal name, and your other name of Grampus.’

Adeliza looked down and blushed. ‘My parents are lowly,’ she said.

‘But how, then, came you at such a seminary?’ said he; ‘twenty pound a quarter, extras and washing not included.’

‘They are humble, but wealthy.’

‘Ha! who is your father?’

‘An alderman of yon metropolis.’

‘An alderman! and what is his profession?’

‘I blush to tell: he is—*an oystermonger*.’

‘AN OYSTERMONGER!’ screamed Roderick, in the largest capitals. ‘Ha! ha! ha! this is too much!’ and he dropped Adeliza’s hand, and never spoke to her during the rest of her walk. They moved moodily on for some time, Miss Binx and the other young man marching astonished in the rear. At length they came within sight of the seminary. ‘Here is Bulgaria House,’ cried the maiden, steadily; ‘Roderick, we must part!’ The effort was too much for her; she flung herself hysterically into his arms.

But, oh, horror! a scream was heard from Miss Binx, who was seen scuttling at double-quick time towards the schoolhouse. Her young man had bolted completely; and close at the side of the lovely, though imprudent couple, stood the angry—and justly angry—Miss Zela Pidge!



'Oh, Ferdinand,' said she, 'is it thus you deceive me? Did I bring you to Bulgaria House for this?—did I give you money to buy clothes for this, that you should go by false names, and make love to that saucy, slammerkin, sentimental Miss Grampus? Ferdinand, Ferdinand,' cried she, 'is this true? can I credit my eyes?'

'D—— your eyes!' said the Signor angrily, as he darted at her a withering look, and retired down the street. His curses might be heard long after he had passed. He never appeared more at Bulgaria House, for he received his dismissal the next day.

That night all the front windows of the Miss Pidges' seminary were smashed to shivers.

On the following Thursday, *two* places were taken in the coach to town. On the back seat sate the usher; on the front, the wasted and miserable Adeliza Grampus.

## CHAPTER II.

BUT the matter did not end here. Miss Grampus's departure elicited from her a disclosure of several circumstances which, we must say, in no degree increased the reputation of Miss Zela Pidge. The discoveries which she made were so awkward, the tale of crime and licentiousness revealed by her so deeply injurious to the character of the establishment, that the pupils emigrated from it in scores. Miss Binx retired to her friends at Wandsworth, Miss Jacobs to her relations in Houndsditch, and other young ladies, not mentioned in this history, to other and more moral schools; so that absolutely, at the end of a single half-year, such had been the scandal of the story, the Misses Pidge were left with only two pupils—Miss Dibble, the article young lady, and Miss Bole, the grocer's daughter, who came in exchange for tea, candles, and other requisites supplied to the establishment by her father.

'I knew it! I knew it!' cried Zela passionately, as she trod the echoing and melancholy schoolroom; 'he told me that none ever prospered who loved him,—that every flower was blighted upon which he shone! Ferdinand, Ferdinand, you have caused ruin there!' (pointing to the empty cupboards and forms); 'but what is that to the blacker ruin *here*?' and the poor creature

slapped her heart, and the big tears rolled down her chin, and so into her tucker.

A very, very few weeks after this, the plate on Bulgaria House was removed for ever. That mansion is now designated 'Moscow Hall, by Mr. Swishtail and assistants:'—the bankrupt and fugitive Misses Pidge have fled, Heaven knows whither! for the steamers to Boulogne cost more than five shillings in those days.

Alderman Grampus, as may be imagined, did not receive his daughter with any extraordinary degree of courtesy. 'He was as grumpy,' Mrs. G. remarked, 'on the occasion as a sow with the measles.' But had he not reason? A lovely daughter who had neglected her education, forgotten her morals for the second time, and fallen almost a prey to villains! Miss Grampus for some months was kept in close confinement, nor ever suffered to stir, except occasionally to Bunhill Row for air, and to church for devotion. Still, though she knew him to be false,—though she knew that under a different, perhaps a prettier name, he had offered the same vows to another,—she could not but think of Roderick.

That *Professor* (as well—too well—he may be called!) knew too well her father's name and reputation to experience any difficulty in finding his abode. It was, as every City man knows, in Cheapside; and thither Dandolo constantly bent his steps: but though he marched unceasingly about the mansion, he never (mysteriously) would pass it. He watched Adeliza walking, he followed her to church; and many and many a time as she jostled out at the gate of the Artillery-ground or the beadle-flanked portal of Bow, a tender hand would meet hers, an active foot would press upon hers, a billet discreetly delivered was as adroitly seized, to hide in the recesses of her pocket-handkerchief, or to nestle in the fragrance of her bosom! Love! Love! how ingenious thou art! thou canst make a ladder of a silken thread, or a weapon of a straw; thou peerest like sunlight into a dungeon; thou scalest, like forlorn hope, a castle wall; the keep is taken!—the foeman has fled!—the banner of love floats triumphantly over the corpses of the slain!<sup>1</sup>

Thus, though denied the comfort of personal intercourse, Adeliza and her lover maintained a frequent and tender correspondence. Nine times at least in a week, she, by bribing her maid-servant, managed to convey letters to the Professor, to which he at rarer intervals, though with equal warmth, replied.

<sup>1</sup> We cannot explain this last passage; but it is so beautiful that the reader will pardon the omission of sense, which the author certainly could have put in if he liked.

‘Why,’ said the young lady in the course of this correspondence, ‘why, when I cast my eyes upon my Roderick, do I see him so woefully changed in outward guise? He wears not the dress which formerly adorned him. Is he poor?—is he in disguise?—do debts oppress him, or traitors track him for his blood? Oh, that my arms might shield him!—oh, that my purse might aid him! It is the fondest wish of

ADELIZA G.

‘P.S.—Aware of your fondness for shell-fish, Susan will leave a barrel of oysters at the Swan with Two Necks, directed to you, as per desire.

AD. G.

‘P.S.—Are you partial to kippered salmon? The girl brings three pounds of it wrapped in a silken handkerchief. ’Tis marked with the hair of

ADELIZA.

‘P.S.—I break open my note to say that you will find in it a small pot of anchovy paste: may it prove acceptable. Heigho! I would that I could accompany it.

A. G.’

It may be imagined, from the text of this note, that Adeliza had profited not a little by the perusal of Miss Swipes’s novels; and it also gives a pretty clear notion of the condition of her lover. When that gentleman was a professor at Bulgaria House, his costume had strictly accorded with his pretensions. He wore a black German coat loaded with frogs and silk trimming, a white broad-brimmed beaver, hessians, and nankeen tights. His costume at present was singularly changed for the worse: a rough brown frock-coat dangled down to the calves of his brawny legs, where likewise ended a pair of greasy shepherd’s-plaid trousers; a dubious red waistcoat, a blue or bird’s-eye neckerchief, and bluchers (or half-boots), remarkable for thickness and for mud, completed his attire. But he looked superior to his fortune; he wore his grey hat very much on one ear; he incessantly tugged at his smoky shirt-collar, and walked jingling the halfpence (when he had any) in his pocket. He was, in fact, no better than an adventurer, and the innocent Adeliza was his prey.

Though the Professor read the first part of this letter with hope and pleasure, it may be supposed that the three postscripts were still more welcome to him,—in fact, he literally did what is often done in novels, he *devoured* them; and Adeliza, on receiving a note from him the next day, after she had eagerly broken the seal, and with panting bosom and flashing eye glanced over the contents—Adeliza, we say, was not altogether pleased when she read the following:—

'Your goodness, dearest, passes belief; but never did poor fellow need it more than your miserable, faithful Roderick. Yes! I *am* poor—I *am* tracked by hell-hounds—I *am* changed in looks, and dress, and happiness—in all but love for thee!

'Hear my tale! I come of a noble Italian family—the noblest, ay, in Venice. We were free once, and rich, and happy; but the Prussian autograph has planted his banner on our towers—the talents of his haughty heagle have seized our wealth, and consigned most of our race to dungeons. I am not a prisoner, only an exile. A mother, a bed-ridden grandmother, and five darling sisters, escaped with me from Venice, and now share my poverty and my home. But I have wrestled with misfortune in vain; I have struggled with want, till want has overcome me. Adeliza, I WANT BREAD!

'The kippered salmon was very good, the anchovies admirable. But, oh, my love! how thirsty they make those who have no means of slaking thirst! My poor grandmother lies delirious in her bed, and cries in vain for drink. Alas! our water is cut off; I have none to give her. The oysters was capital. Bless thee, bless thee! angel of bounty! Have you any more sich, and a few shrimps? My sisters are *very* fond of them.

'Half-a-crown would oblige. But thou art too good to me already, and I blush to ask thee for more. Adieu, Adeliza.—The wretched but faithful,

RODERICK FERDINAND  
(38th Count of Dandolo).

'BELL-YARD, *June —.*'

A shade of dissatisfaction, we say, clouded Adeliza's fair features as she perused this note; and yet there was nothing in it which the tenderest lover might not write. But the shrimps, the half-crown, the horrid picture of squalid poverty presented by the Count, sickened her young heart; the innate delicacy of the woman revolted at the thought of all this misery.

But better thoughts succeeded: her breast heaved as she read and re-read the singular passage concerning the Prussian autograph, who had planted his standard at Venice. 'I knew it!' she cried, 'I knew it!—he is of noble race! O Roderick, I will perish, but I will help thee!'

Alas! she was not well enough acquainted with history to perceive that the Prussian autograph had nothing to do with Venice, and had forgotten altogether that she herself had coined the story which this adventurer returned to her.

But a difficulty presented itself to Adeliza's mind. Her lover asked for money—where was she to find it? The next day the

till of the shop was empty, and a weeping apprentice dragged before the Lord Mayor. It is true that no signs of the money were found upon him; it is true that he protested his innocence; but he was dismissed the alderman's service, and passed a month at Bridewell, because Adeliza Grampus had a needy lover.

'Dearest,' she wrote, 'will three-and-twenty and sevenpence suffice? 'Tis all I have; take it, and with it the fondest wishes of your Adeliza.

'A sudden thought! Our apprentice is dismissed. My father dines abroad; I shall be in the retail establishment all the night, *alone*.  
A. G.'

No sooner had the Professor received this note than his mind was made up. 'I will see her,' he said; 'I will enter that accursed shop.' He did, and *to his ruin*.

That night Mrs. Grampus and her daughter took possession of the bar or counter, in the place which Adeliza called the retail establishment, and which is commonly denominated the shop. Mrs. Grampus herself operated with the oyster-knife, and served the Milton morsels to the customers. Age had not diminished her skill, nor had wealth rendered her too proud to resume at need a profession which she had followed in early days. Adeliza flew gracefully to and fro with the rolls, the vinegar-bottle with perforated cork, and the little pats of butter. A little boy ran backwards and forwards to the Blue Lion over the way, for the pots of porter, or for the brandy-and-water, which some gentlemen take after the play.

Midnight arrived. Miss Grampus was looking through the window, and contrasting the gleaming gas which shone upon the ruby lobsters, with the calm moon which lightened up the Poultry, and threw a halo round the Royal Exchange. She was lost in maiden meditation, when her eye fell upon a pane of glass in her own window: squeezed against this, flat and white, was the nose of a man!—that man was Roderick Dandolo! He seemed to be gazing at the lobsters more intensely than at Adeliza; he had his hands in his pockets, and was whistling 'Jim Crow.'<sup>1</sup>

Miss Grampus felt sick with joy. She staggered to the counter, and almost fainted. The Professor concluded his melody, and entered at once into the shop. He pretended to have no knowledge of Miss Grampus, but *aborded* the two ladies with easy elegance and irresistible good-humour.

<sup>1</sup> I know this is an anachronism; but I only mean that he was performing one of the popular melodies of the time.—M. A. T.



'Good evening, ma'am,' said he, bowing profoundly to the *elder* lady. 'What a precious hot evening, *to* be sure!—hot, ma'am, and hungry, as they say. I could not resist them lobsters, 'specially when I saw the lady behind 'em.'

At this gallant speech Mrs. Grampus blushed, or looked as if she would blush, and said—

'Law, sir!'

'Law, indeed, ma'am,' playfully continued the Professor; 'you're a precious deal better than law—you're *divinity*, ma'am; and this, I presume, is your sister?'

He pointed to Adeliza as he spoke, who, pale and mute, stood fainting against a heap of ginger-beer bottles. The old lady was quite won by this stale compliment.

'My daughter, sir,' she said. 'Addly, lay a cloth for the gentleman. Do you take hoysters, sir, hor lobsters? Both is very fine.'

'Why, ma'am,' said he, 'to say truth, I have come forty miles since dinner, and don't care if I have a little of both. I'll begin, if you please, with that there (Lord bless its claws, they're as red as your lips!), and we'll astonish a few of the natives afterwards, *by* your leave.'

Mrs. Grampus was delighted with the manners and the appetite of the stranger. She proceeded forthwith to bisect the lobster, while the Professor, in a *dégagé* manner, his cane over his shoulder, and a cheerful whistle upon his lips, entered the little parlour, and took possession of a box and a table.

He was no sooner seated than, from a scuffle, a giggle, and a smack, Mrs. Grampus was induced to suspect that something went wrong in the oyster-room.

'Hadeliza!' cried she; and that young woman returned blushing now like a rose, who had been as pale before as a lily.

Mrs. G. herself took in the lobster, bidding her daughter sternly to stay in the shop. She approached the stranger with an angry air, and laid the lobster before him.

'For shame, sir!' said she solemnly; but all of a sudden she began to giggle like her daughter, and her speech ended with an '*Have done now!*'

We were not behind the curtain, and cannot of course say what took place; but it is evident that the Professor was a general lover of the sex.

Mrs. Grampus returned to the shop, rubbing her lips with her fat arms, and restored to perfect good-humour. The little errand-boy was despatched over the way for a bottle of Guinness and a glass of brandy-and-water.

'HOT WITH!' shouted a manly voice from the eating-room, and Adeliza was pained to think that in her presence her lover could eat so well.

He ate indeed as if he had never eaten before : here is the bill as written by Mrs. Grampus herself :—

	s.	d.
'Two lobsters at 3s. 6d.	7	0
Sallit	1	3
2 Bottils Doubling Stott	2	4
11 Doz. Best natifs	7	4
14 Pads of Botter	1	2
4 Glasses B. & W.	4	0
Bredd (love & $\frac{1}{2}$ )	1	2
Brakitch of tumler	1	6
	<hr/>	
	1	5 9

'To Samuel Grampus,

'At the Mermaid in Cheapside.

'Shell-fish in all varieties. *N.B.*—A great saving in taking a quantity.'

'A saving in *taking a quantity*,' said the stranger archly. 'Why, ma'am, you ought to let me off *very cheap*;' and the Professor, the pot-boy, Adeliza, and her mamma, grinned equally at this pleasantry.

'However, never mind the pay, missis,' continued he; 'we an't a-going to quarrel about *that*. Hadd another glass of brandy-and-water to the bill, and bring it me, when it shall be as I am now.'

'Law, sir,' simpered Mrs. Grampus, 'how's that?'

'*Reseated*, ma'am, to be sure,' replied he, as he sank back upon the table. The old lady went laughing away, pleased with her merry and facetious customer; the little boy picked up the oyster-shells, of which a mighty pyramid was formed at the Professor's feet.

'Here, Sammy,' cried out shrill Mrs. Grampus from the shop, 'go over to the Blue Lion and get the gentleman his glass: but no, you are better where you are, pickin' up them shells. Go you, Hadeliza; it is but across the way.'

Adeliza went with a very bad grace; she had hoped to exchange at least a few words with him her soul adored, and her mother's jealousy prevented the completion of her wish.

She had scarcely gone, when Mr. Grampus entered from his dinner-party. But, though fond of pleasure, he was equally

faithful to business; without a word, he hung up his brass-buttoned coat, put on his hairy cap, and stuck his sleeves through his apron.

As Mrs. Grampus was tying it (an office which this faithful lady regularly performed), he asked her what business had occurred during his absence.

'Not so bad,' said she; 'two pound ten to-night, besides one pound eight to receive,' and she handed Mr. Grampus the bill.

'How many are there on 'em?' said that gentleman, smiling, as his eye gladly glanced over the items of the account.

'Why, that's the best of all: how many do you think?'

'If four did it,' said Mr. Grampus, 'they wouldn't have done badly neither.'

'What do you think of *one*?' cried Mrs. G., laughing, 'and he an't done yet. Haddy is gone to fetch him another glass of brandy-and-water.'

Mr. Grampus looked very much alarmed. 'Only one, and you say he an't paid?'

'No,' said the lady.

Mr. Grampus seized the bill, and rushed wildly into the dining-room. The little boy was picking up the oyster-shells still, there were so many of them; the Professor was seated on the table, laughing as if drunk, and picking his teeth with his fork.

Grampus, shaking in every joint, held out the bill. A horrid thought crossed him; he had seen that face before!

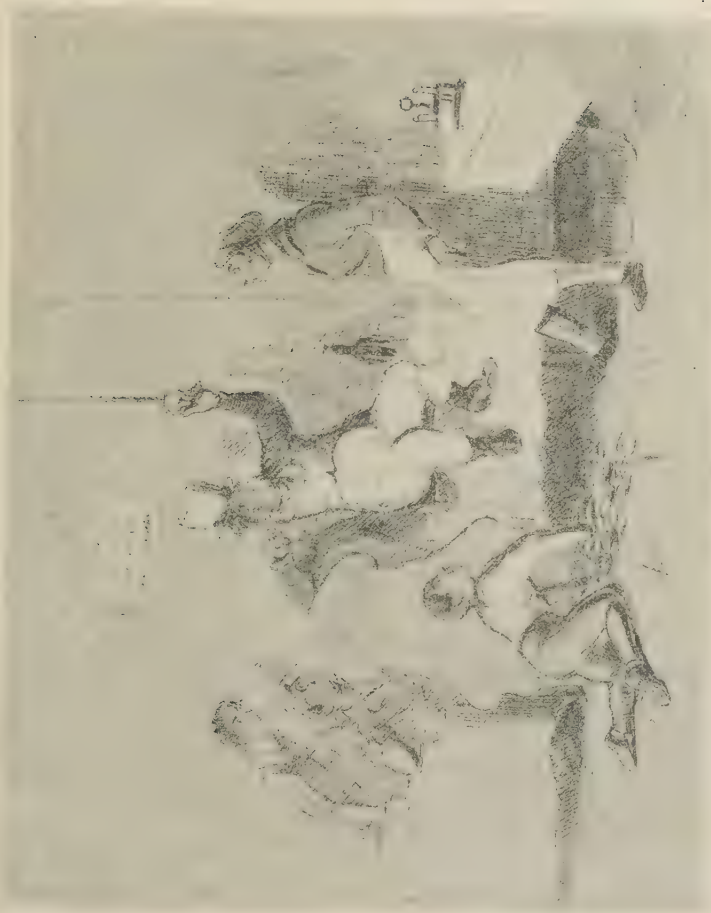
The Professor kicked sneeringly into the air the idle piece of paper, and swung his legs recklessly to and fro.

'What a flat you are,' shouted he, in a voice of thunder, 'to think I'm a-goin' to pay! Pay! I never pay—I'M DANDO!'

The people in the other boxes crowded forward to see the celebrated stranger; the little boy grinned as he dropped two hundred and forty-four oyster-shells, and Mr. Grampus rushed madly into his front shop, shrieking for a watchman.

As he ran, he stumbled over something on the floor—a woman and a glass of brandy-and-water lay there extended. Like Tarquinia reversed, Elijah Grampus was trampling over the lifeless body of Adeliza.

Why enlarge upon the miserable theme? The confiding girl, in returning with the grog from the Blue Lion, had arrived at the shop only in time to hear the fatal name of DANDO. She saw him, tipsy and triumphant, bestriding the festal table, and yelling with horrid laughter! The truth flashed upon her—she fell!



MR. DANDO DECLARES HIS NAME AND QUALITY.

Lost to worldly cares in contemplating the sorrows of their idolised child, her parents forgot all else beside. Mrs. G. held the vinegar-cruet to her nostrils; her husband brought the soda-water fountain to play upon her; it restored her to life, but not to sense. When Adeliza Grampus rose from that trance she was a MANIAC!

But what became of *the deceiver*? The gormandising ruffian, the lying renegade, the fiend in human shape, escaped in the midst of this scene of desolation. He walked unconcerned through the shop, his hat cocked on one side as before, swaggering as before, whistling as before: far in the moonlight might you see his figure; long, long in the night-silence rang his demoniac melody of 'Jim Crow!'

When Samuel the boy cleaned out the shop in the morning, and made the inventory of the goods, a silver fork, a plated ditto, a dish, and a pewter-pot were found to be wanting. Ingenuity will not be long in guessing the name of *the thief*.

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Gentles, my tale is told. If it may have deterred one soul from vice, my end is fully answered: if it may have taught to schoolmistresses carefulness, to pupils circumspection, to youth the folly of sickly sentiment, the pain of bitter deception; to manhood the crime, the *meanness* of gluttony, the vice which it occasions, and the wicked passions it fosters; if these, or any of these, have been taught by the above tale, Goliah Gahagan seeks for no other reward.

NOTE.—Please send the proceeds as requested per letter; the bearer being directed not to give up the manuscript without.



# THE BEDFORD ROW CONSPIRACY.

## CHAPTER I.

OF THE LOVES OF MR. PERKINS AND MISS GORGON, AND OF THE  
TWO GREAT FACTIONS IN THE TOWN OF OLDBOROUGH.

‘MY dear John,’ cried Lucy, with a very wise look indeed, ‘it must and shall be so. As for Doughty Street, with our means, a house is out of the question. We must keep three servants, and aunt Biggs says the taxes are one and twenty pounds a year.’

‘I have seen a sweet place at Chelsea,’ remarked John; ‘Paradise Row, No. 17,—garden—greenhouse—fifty pounds a year—omnibus to town within a mile.’

‘What, that I may be left alone all day, and you spend a fortune in driving backward and forward in those horrid breakneck cabs? My darling, I should die there—die of fright, I know I should. Did you not say yourself that the road was not as yet lighted, and that the place swarmed with public-houses and dreadful tipsy Irish bricklayers? Would you kill me, John?’

‘My da—arling,’ said John, with tremendous fondness, clutching Miss Lucy suddenly round the waist, and rapping the hand of that young person violently against his waistcoat,—‘my—da—arling, don’t say such things, even in a joke. If I objected to the chambers, it is only because you, my love, with your birth and connections, ought to have a house of your own. The chambers are quite large enough, and certainly quite good enough for me.’ And so, after some more sweet parley on the part of these young people, it was agreed that they should take up their abode, when married, in a part of the house, number one hundred and something, Bedford Row.

It will be necessary to explain to the reader that John was no other than John Perkins, Esq., of the Middle Temple, barrister-at-law, and that Miss Lucy was the daughter of the late Captain Gorgon, and Marianne Biggs, his wife. The captain being of noble

<sup>1</sup> [ *The New Monthly Magazine*, January, March, April, 1840.]

connections, younger son of a baronet, cousin to Lord X., and related to the Y. family, had angered all his relatives by marrying a very silly, pretty young woman, who kept a ladies' school at Canterbury. She had six hundred pounds to her fortune, which the captain laid out in the purchase of a sweet travelling-carriage and dressing-case for himself; and going abroad with his lady, spent several years in the principal prisons of Europe, in one of which he died. His wife and daughter were meantime supported by the contributions of Mrs. Jemima Biggs, who still kept the ladies' school.

At last a dear old relative—such a one as one reads of in romances—died and left seven thousand pounds apiece to the two sisters, whereupon the elder gave up schooling and retired to London, and the younger managed to live with some comfort and decency at Brussels, upon two hundred and ten pounds per annum. Mrs. Gorgon never touched a shilling of her capital, for the very good reason that it was placed entirely out of her reach; so that when she died, her daughter found herself in possession of a sum of money that is not always to be met with in this world.

Her aunt the baronet's lady, and her aunt the ex-schoolmistress, both wrote very pressing invitations to her, and she resided with each for six months after her arrival in England. Now, for a second time, she had come to Mrs. Biggs, Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square. It was under the roof of that respectable old lady that John Perkins, Esq., being invited to take tea, wooed and won Miss Gorgon.

Having thus described the circumstances of Miss Gorgon's life, let us pass for a moment from that young lady, and lift up the veil of mystery which envelops the deeds and character of Perkins.

Perkins too was an orphan; and he and his Lucy, of summer evenings, when Sol descending lingered fondly yet about the minarets of the Foundling, and gilded the grass-plots of Mecklenburgh Square—Perkins, I say, and Lucy would often sit together in the summer-house of that pleasure-ground, and muse upon the strange coincidences of their life. Lucy was motherless and fatherless; so too was Perkins. If Perkins was brotherless and sisterless, was not Lucy likewise an only child? Perkins was twenty-three—his age and Lucy's united amounted to forty-six; and it was to be remarked, as a fact still more extraordinary, that while Lucy's relatives were *aunts*, John's were *uncles*; mysterious spirit of love! let us treat thee with respect and whisper not too many of thy secrets. The fact is, John and Lucy were a pair of fools (as every young couple *ought* to be who have hearts that are worth a farthing), and were ready to find coincidence; sympathies, hidden gushes of

feeling, mystic unions of the soul, and what not, in every single circumstance that occurred from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, and in the intervals. Bedford Row, where Perkins lived, is not very far from Mecklenburgh Square; and John used to say, that he felt a comfort that his house and Lucy's were served by the same muffin-man.

Further comment is needless. A more honest, simple, clever, warm-hearted, soft, whimsical, romantical, high-spirited young fellow than John Perkins did not exist. When his father, Dr. Perkins, died, this, his only son, was placed under the care of John Perkins, Esq., of the house of Perkins, Scully, and Perkins, those celebrated attorneys in the trading town of Oldborough, which the second partner, William Pitt Scully, Esq., represented in Parliament and in London.

All John's fortune was the house in Bedford Row, which, at his father's death, was let out into chambers, and brought in a clear hundred a year. Under his uncle's roof at Oldborough, where he lived with thirteen red-haired male and female cousins, he was only charged fifty pounds for board, clothes, and pocket-money, and the remainder of his rents was carefully put by for him until his majority. When he approached that period—when he came to belong to two spouting clubs at Oldborough, among the young merchants and lawyers' clerks—to blow the flute nicely, and play a good game at billiards—to have written one or two smart things in the *Oldborough Sentinel*—to be fond of smoking (in which act he was discovered by his fainting aunt at three o'clock one morning)—in one word, when John Perkins arrived at manhood, he discovered that he was quite unfit to be an attorney, that he detested all the ways of his uncle's stern, dull, vulgar, regular, red-headed family, and he vowed that he would go to London and make his fortune. Thither he went, his aunt and cousins, who were all 'serious,' vowing that he was a lost boy, and when his history opens, John had been two years in the metropolis, inhabiting his own garrets; and a very nice compact set of apartments, looking into the back-garden, at this moment falling vacant, the prudent Lucy Gorgon had visited them, and vowed that she and her John should there commence housekeeping.

All these explanations are tedious, but necessary; and furthermore, it must be said, that as John's uncle's partner was the Liberal member for Oldborough, so Lucy's uncle was its Ministerial representative.

This gentleman, the brother of the deceased Captain Gorgon, lived at the paternal mansion of Gorgon Castle, and rejoiced in the name and title of Sir John Grimsby Gorgon. He too, like his

younger brother, had married a lady beneath his own rank in life ; having espoused the daughter and heiress of Mr. Hicks, the great brewer at Oldborough, who held numerous mortgages on the Gorgon property, all of which he yielded up, together with his daughter Eliza, to the care of the baronet.

What Lady Gorgon was in character, this history will show. In person, if she may be compared to any vulgar animal, one of her father's heavy, healthy, broad-flanked, Roman-nosed white dray-horses might, to the poetic mind, appear to resemble her. At twenty she was a splendid creature, and though not at her full growth, yet remarkable for strength and sinew ; at forty-five she was as fine a woman as any in his Majesty's dominions. Five feet seven in height, thirteen stone, her own teeth and hair, she looked as if she were the mother of a regiment of grenadier-guards. She had three daughters of her own size, and at length, ten years after the birth of the last of the young ladies, a son—one son—George Augustus Frederic Grimsby Gorgon, the godson of a royal duke, whose steady officer in waiting Sir George had been for many years.

It is needless to say, after entering so largely into a description of Lady Gorgon, that her husband was a little, shrivelled, weazel-faced creature, eight inches shorter than her ladyship. This is the way of the world, as every single reader of this book must have remarked ; for frolic love delights to join giants and pigmies of different sexes in the bonds of matrimony. When you saw her ladyship, in flame-coloured satin, and gorgeous toque and feathers, entering the drawing-room, as footmen along the stairs shouted melodiously, SIR GEORGE AND LADY GORGON, you beheld in her company a small withered old gentleman, with powder and large royal household buttons, who tripped at her elbow as a little weak-legged colt does at the side of a stout mare.

The little General had been present at about a hundred and twenty pitch-battles on Hounslow Heath and Wormwood Scrubbs, but had never drawn his sword against an enemy. As might be expected, therefore, his talk and *tenue* were outrageously military. He had the whole army-list by heart—that is, as far as the field-officers—all below them he scorned. A bugle at Gorgon Castle always sounded to breakfast and dinner : a gun announced sunset. He clung to his pigtail for many years after the army had forsaken that ornament, and could never be brought to think much of the Peninsular men for giving it up. When he spoke of the duke, he used to call him '*My Lord Wellington—I recollect him as Captain Wesley.*' He swore fearfully in conversation—was most regular at church, and regularly read to his family and domestics the morning and evening prayer ; he bullied his daughters, *seemed*

to bully his wife, who led him whither she chose ; gave grand entertainments, and never asked a friend by chance ; had splendid liveries, and starved his people ; and was as dull, stingy, pompous, insolent, cringing, ill-tempered a little creature as ever was known.

With such qualities, you may fancy that he was generally admired in society and by his country. So he was : and I never knew a man so endowed whose way through life was not safe—who had fewer pangs of conscience—more positive enjoyments—more respect shown to him—more favours granted to him, than such a one as my friend the General.

Her ladyship was just suited to him, and they did in reality admire each other hugely. Previously to her marriage with the baronet, many love-passages had passed between her and William Pitt Scully, Esq., the attorney, and there was especially one story, *à propos* of certain syllabubs and Sally-Lunn cakes, which seemed to show that matters had gone very far. Be this as it may, no sooner did the General (Major Gorgon he was then) cast an eye on her, than Scully's five years' fabric of love was instantly dashed to the ground. She cut him pitilessly, cut Sally Scully, his, sister, her dearest friend and confidante, and bestowed her big person upon the little *aide-de-camp* at the end of a fortnight's wooing. In the course of time, their mutual fathers died ; the Gorgon estates were unencumbered : patron of both the seats in the borough of Oldborough, and occupant of one, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, was a personage of no small importance.

He was, it scarcely need be said, a Tory ; and this was the reason why William Pitt Scully, Esq., of the firm of Perkins and Scully, deserted those principles in which he had been bred and christened ; deserted that church which he had frequented, for he could not bear to see Sir George and my lady flaunting in their grand pew ;—deserted, I say, the church, adopted the conventicle, and became one of the most zealous and eloquent supporters that Freedom has known in our time. Scully, of the house of Scully and Perkins, was a dangerous enemy. In five years from that marriage, which snatched from the jilted solicitor his heart's young affections, Sir George Gorgon found that he must actually spend seven hundred pounds to keep his two seats. At the next election, a Liberal was set up against his man, and actually run him hard ; and finally, at the end of eighteen years, the rejected Scully—the mean attorney—was actually the *first* member for Oldborough, Sir George Grimsby Gorgon, Baronet, being only the second !

The agony of that day cannot be imagined—the dreadful curses of Sir George, who saw fifteen hundred a year robbed from under



his very nose—the religious resignation of my lady—the hideous window-smashing that took place at the Gorgon Arms, and the discomfiture of the pelted mayor and corporation. The very next Sunday, Scully was reconciled to the church (or attended it in the morning, and the meeting twice in the afternoon), and as Doctor Shorter uttered the prayer for the High Court of Parliament, his eye—the eye of his whole party—turned towards Lady Gorgon and Sir George in a most unholy triumph. Sir George (who always stood during prayers, like a military man) fairly sank down among the hassocks, and Lady Gorgon was heard to sob as audibly as ever did little beadle-belaboured urchin.

Scully, when at Oldborough, came from that day forth to church. ‘What,’ said he, ‘was it to him? were we not all brethren?’ Old Perkins, however, kept religiously to the Square-toes congregation. In fact, to tell the truth, this subject had been debated between the partners, who saw the advantage of courting both the establishment and the dissenters—a manœuvre which, I need not say, is repeated in almost every country town in England, where a solicitor’s house has this kind of power and connection.

Three months after this election came the races at Oldborough, and the race-ball. Gorgon was so infuriated by his defeat, that he gave ‘the Gorgon cup and cover,’ a matter of fifteen pounds. Scully, ‘although anxious,’ as he wrote from town, ‘anxious beyond measure to preserve the breed of horses for which our beloved country has ever been famous, could attend no such sports as these, which but too often degenerated into vice.’ It was voted a shabby excuse. Lady Gorgon was radiant in her barouche and four, and gladly became the patroness of the ball that was to ensue; and which all the gentry and townspeople, Tory and Whig, were in the custom of attending. The ball took place on the last day of the races—on that day, the walls of the market-house, the principal public buildings, and the Gorgon Arms hotel itself, were plastered with the following—

LETTER FROM OUR DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVE, WILLIAM  
P. SCULLY, ESQ., ETC. ETC.

‘HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
*Wednesday, June 4, 18—.*

‘MY DEAR HEELTAP,—You know my opinion about horse-racing, and though I blame neither you nor any brother Englishman who enjoys that manly sport, you will, I am sure, appreciate the conscientious motives which induce me not to appear among

my friends and constituents on the festival of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th instant. If I, however, cannot allow my name to appear among your list of stewards, *one* at least of the representatives of Oldborough has no such scruples. Sir George Gorgon is among you; and though I differ from that honorable baronet on more than *one vital point*, I am glad to think that he is with you—a gentleman, a soldier, a man of property in the county, how can he be better employed than in forwarding the county's amusements, and in forwarding the happiness of all?

‘Had I no such scruples as those to which I have just alluded, I must still have refrained from coming among you. Your great Oldborough common-drainage and inclosure bill comes on to-night, and I shall be *at my post*. I am sure, if Sir George Gorgon were here, he and I should on this occasion vote side by side, and that party strife would be forgotten in the object of our common interest—*our dear native town*.

‘There is, however, another occasion at hand, in which I shall be proud to meet him. Your ball is on the night of the 6th. Party forgotten—brotherly union—innocent mirth—beauty, *our dear town's beauty*, our daughters in the joy of their expanding loveliness, our matrons in the exquisite contemplation of their children's bliss,—can you, can I, can Whig or Tory, can any Briton be indifferent to a scene like this, or refuse to join in this heart-stirring festival? If there *be* such, let them pardon me,—I, for one, my dear Heeltap, will be among you on Friday night—ay, and hereby invite all pretty Tory Misses, who are in want of a partner.

‘I am here in the very midst of good things, you know, and we old folks like *a supper* after a dance. Please to accept a brace of bucks and a turtle, which come herewith. My worthy colleague, who was so liberal last year of his soup to the poor, will not, I trust, refuse to taste a little of Alderman Birch's—'tis offered on my part with hearty goodwill. Hey for the 6th, and *vive la joie*!—Ever, my dear Heeltap, your faithful,

W. PITT SCULLY.

‘*P.S.*—Of course this letter is *strictly private*. Say that the venison, etc., came from a *well-wisher to Oldborough*.’

This amazing letter was published, in defiance of Mr. Scully's injunctions, by the enthusiastic Heeltap, who said bluntly, in a preface, ‘that he saw no reason why Mr. Scully should be ashamed of his action, and he, for his part, was glad to let all friends at Oldborough know of it.’

The allusion about the Gorgon soup was killing; thirteen paupers in Oldborough had, it was confidently asserted, died of it. Lady Gorgon, on the reading of this letter, was struck completely dumb—Sir George Gorgon was wild. Ten dozen of champagne was he obliged to send down to the Gorgon Arms, to be added to the festival. He would have stayed away if he could, but he dared not.

At nine o'clock, he in his general's uniform, his wife in blue satin and diamonds, his daughters in blue crape and white roses, his niece, Lucy Gorgon, in white muslin, his son, George Augustus Frederic Grimsby Gorgon, in a blue velvet jacket, sugar-loaf buttons, and nankeens, entered the north door of the ballroom to much cheering and the sound of 'God save the King!'

At that very same moment, and from the south door, issued William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., and his staff. Mr. Scully had a bran-new blue coat and brass buttons, buff waistcoat, white kerseymere tights, pumps with large rosettes, and pink silk stockings.

'This wool,' said he to a friend, 'was grown on Oldborough sheep, this cloth was spun in Oldborough looms, these buttons were cast in an Oldborough manufactory, these shoes were made by an Oldborough tradesman, this *heart* first beat in Oldborough town, and pray Heaven may be buried there!'

Could anything resist a man like this? John Perkins, who had come down as one of Scully's *aides-de-camp*, in a fit of generous enthusiasm, leaped on a whist-table, flung up a pocket-handkerchief, and shrieked—SCULLY FOR EVER!

Heeltap, who was generally drunk, fairly burst into tears, and the grave tradesmen and Whig gentry, who had dined with the member at his inn, and accompanied him thence to the Gorgon Arms, lifted their deep voices and shouted 'Hear! Good! Bravo! Noble! Scully for ever! God bless him! and Hurra!'

The scene was tumultuously affecting, and when young Perkins sprang down from the table and came blushing up to the member, that gentleman said—

'Thank you, Jack! *thank* you, my boy! THANK you,' in a way which made Perkins think that his supreme cup of bliss was quaffed, that he had but to die; for that life had no other such joy in store for him. Scully was Perkins's Napoleon—he yielded himself up to the attorney, body and soul.

Whilst this scene was going on under one chandelier of the ballroom, beneath the other, scarlet little General Gorgon, sumptuous Lady Gorgon, the daughters and niece Gorgons, were standing, surrounded by their Tory court, who affected to sneer

and titter at the Whig demonstrations which were taking place.

'What a howwid thmell of withkey!' lisped Cornet Fitch, of the Dragoons to Miss Lucy, confidentially; 'and thethe are what they call Whighth, are they? he! he!'

'They are drunk, — me — drunk by ———!' said the General to the Mayor.

'Which is Scully?' said Lady Gorgon, lifting her glass gravely (she was at that very moment thinking of the syllabubs). 'Is it that tipsy man in the green coat, or that vulgar creature in the blue one?'

'Law, my lady,' said the Mayoress; 'have you forgotten him? Why that's him in blue and buff.'

'And a monthous fine man, too,' said Cornet Fitch; 'I wish we had him in our twoop—he'th thix feet thwee, if he'th an inch, ain't he, genewal?'

No reply.

'And Heavens! mamma,' shrieked the three Gorgons, in a breath, 'see one creature is on the whist-table. Oh, the wretch!'

'I'm sure he's very good-looking,' said Lucy simply.

Lady Gorgon darted at her an angry look, and was about to say something very contemptuous, when, at that instant, John Perkins's shout taking effect, Master George Augustus Frederic Grimsby Gorgon, not knowing better, incontinently raised a small shout on his side.

'Hear! good! bravo!' exclaimed he; 'Scully for ever! Hurra-a-ay!' and fell skipping about like the Whigs opposite.

'Silence, you brute, you!' groaned Lady Gorgon; and seizing him by the shirt-frill and coat-collar, carried him away to his nurse, who with many other maids of the Whig and Tory parties, stood giggling and peeping at the landing-place.

Fancy how all these small incidents augmented the heap of Lady Gorgon's anger and injuries! She was a dull, phlegmatic woman for the most part, and contented herself generally with merely despising her neighbours; but oh! what a fine active hatred raged in her bosom for victorious Scully! At this moment Mr. Perkins had finished shaking hands with his Napoleon—Napoleon seemed bent upon some tremendous enterprise. He was looking at Lady Gorgon very hard.

'She's a fine woman,' said Scully thoughtfully; he was still holding the hand of Perkins. And then, after a pause, 'Gad! I think I'll try.'

'Try what, sir?'

'She's a *dawed* fine woman!' burst out again the tender solicitor. 'I *will* go.—Springer, tell the fiddlers to strike up.'

Springer scuttled across the room, and gave the leader of the band a knowing nod. Suddenly, 'God save the King' ceased, and 'Sir Roger de Coverley' began. The rival forces eyed each other; Mr. Scully, accompanied by his friend, came forward, looking very red, and fumbling two large kid gloves.

'*He's going to ask me to dance,*' hissed out Lady Gorgon, with a dreadful intuition, and she drew back behind her lord.

'D—— it, madam, *then dance* with him!' said the general. 'Don't you see that the scoundrel is carrying it all his own way; —— him, and —— him, and —— him.' (All of which dashes the reader may fill up with oaths of such strength as may be requisite.)

'General!' cried Lady Gorgon, but could say no more. Scully was before her.

'Madam!' exclaimed the Liberal member for Oldborough 'in a moment like this—I say—that is—that on the present occasion—your ladyship—unaccustomed as I am—pooh, psha—*will* your ladyship give me the distinguished honour and pleasure of going down the country-dance with your ladyship!'

An immense heave of her ladyship's ample chest was perceptible. Yards of blonde lace which might be compared to the foam of the sea, were agitated at the same moment, and by the same mighty emotion. The river of diamonds which flowed round her ladyship's neck seemed to swell and to shine more than ever. The tall plumes on her ambrosial head bowed down beneath the storm. In other words, Lady Gorgon, in a furious rage, which she was compelled to restrain, trembled, drew up, and bowing majestically said,

'Sir, I shall have much pleasure.' With this she extended her hand. Scully, trembling, thrust forward one of his huge kid gloves, and led her to the head of the country-dance. John Perkins, who I presume had been drinking pretty freely so as to have forgotten his ordinary bashfulness, looked at the three Gorgons in blue, then at the pretty smiling one in white, and stepping up to her without the smallest hesitation, asked her if she would dance with him. The young lady smilingly agreed. The great example of Scully and Lady Gorgon was followed by all dancing men and women. Political enmities were forgotten. Whig voters invited Tory voters' wives to the dance. The daughters of Reform accepted the hands of the sons of Conservatives. The reconciliation of the Romans and Sabines was not more touching than this sweet fusion. Whack! whack! Mr.



Springer clapped his hands: and the fiddlers, adroitly obeying the cheerful signal, began playing 'Sir Roger de Coverley' louder than ever.

I do not know by what extraordinary charm (*nescio quâ præter solitum, etc.*); but young Perkins, who all his life had hated country-dances, was delighted with this one, and skipped, and laughed, poussetting, crossing, down-the-middling, with his merry little partner, till every one of the bettermost sort of the thirty-nine couples had dropped panting away, and till the youngest Miss Gorgon, coming up to his partner, said, in a loud, hissing, scornful whisper, 'Lucy, mamma thinks you have danced quite enough with this—this person.' And Lucy, blushing, starting back, and looking at Perkins in a very melancholy way, made him a little curtsey, and went off to the Gorgonian party with her cousin. Perkins was too frightened to lead her back to her place—too frightened at first, and then too angry. 'Person!' said he: his soul swelled with a desperate republicanism: he went back to his patron more of a radical than ever.

He found that gentleman in the solitary tea-room, pacing up and down before the observant landlady and handmaidens of the 'Gorgon Arms,' wiping his brows, gnawing his fingers—his ears looming over his stiff white shirt-collar as red as fire. Once more the great man seized John Perkins's hand as the latter came up.

'D—— the aristocrats!' roared the ex-follower of Squaretoes.

'And so say I; but what's the matter, sir?'

'What's the matter?—Why, that woman—that infernal, haughty, straitlaced, cold-blooded brewer's daughter! I loved that woman, sir—I *kissed* that woman, sir, twenty years ago: we were all but engaged, sir—we've walked for hours and hours, sir—us and the governess—I've got a lock of her hair, sir, among my papers now; and to-night, would you believe it?—as soon as she got to the bottom of the set, away she went—not one word would she speak to me all the way down: and when I wanted to lead her to her place, and asked her if she would have a glass of negus, "Sir," says she, "I have done my duty; I bear no malice: but I consider you a traitor to Sir George Gorgon's family—a traitor and an upstart! I consider your speaking to me as a piece of insolent vulgarity, and beg you will leave me to myself!" There's her speech, sir. Twenty people heard it, and all of her Tory set too. I'll tell you what, Jack: at the next election I'll put *you* up. Oh! that woman! that woman!—and to think that I love her still!' Here Mr. Scully paused, and fiercely consoled himself by swallowing three cups of Mrs. Rincer's green tea.

The fact is, that Lady Gorgon's passion had completely got the

better of her reason. Her ladyship was naturally cold, and artificially extremely squeamish ; and when this great red-faced enemy of hers looked tenderly at her through his red little eyes, and squeezed her hand, and attempted to renew old acquaintance, she felt such an intolerable disgust at his triumph, at his familiarity, and at the remembrance of her own former liking for him, that she gave utterance to the speech above correctly reported. The Tories were delighted with her spirit, and Cornet Fitch, with much glee, told the story to the general ; but that officer, who was at whist with some of his friends, flung down his cards, and coming up to his lady, said briefly—

‘Madame, you are a fool!’

‘I will *not* stay here to be bearded by that disgusting man!—Mr. Fitch, call my people.—Henrietta, bring Miss Lucy from that linendraper with whom she is dancing. I will not stay, General, once for all.’

Henrietta ran—she hated her cousin ; Cornet Fitch was departing. ‘Stop, Fitch,’ said Sir George, seizing him by the arm. ‘You are a fool, Lady Gorgon,’ said he, ‘and I repeat it—a ——— fool! This fellow Scully is carrying all before him : he has talked with everybody, laughed with everybody—and you, with your infernal airs—a brewer’s daughter, by ———, must sit like a queen and not speak to a soul! You’ve lost me one seat of my borough, with your infernal pride—fifteen hundred a year, by Jove!—and you think you will bully me out of another. No, madam, you *shall* stay, and stay supper too ;—and the girls shall dance with every cursed chimney-sweep and butcher in the room : they shall, confound me!’

Her ladyship saw that it was necessary to submit ; and Mr. Springer, the master of the ceremonies, was called and requested to point out some eligible partners for the young ladies. One went off with a Whig auctioneer ; another figured in a quadrille with a very liberal apothecary ; and the third, Miss Henrietta, remained.

‘Hallo ! you, sir!’ roared the little general to John Perkins, who was passing by. John turned round and faced him.

‘You were dancing with my niece just now—show us your skill now, and dance with one of my daughters. Stand up, Miss Henrietta Gorgon—Mr. What’s-your-name?’

‘My name,’ said John, with marked and majestic emphasis, ‘is PERKINS.’ And he looked towards Lucy, who dared not look again.

‘Miss Gorgon—Mr. Perkins. There, now go and dance.’

‘Mr. Perkins regrets, madam,’ said John, making a bow to Miss Henrietta, ‘that he is not able to dance this evening. I am

this moment obliged to look to the supper; but you will find, no doubt, some other PERSON who will have much pleasure.'

'Go to —, sir!' screamed the general, starting up, and shaking his cane.

'Calm yourself, dearest George,' said Lady Gorgon, clinging fondly to him. Fitch twiddled his moustaches. Miss Henrietta Gorgon stared with open mouth. The silks of the surrounding dowagers rustled—the countenances of all looked grave.

'I will follow you, sir, wherever you please; and you may hear of me whenever you like,' said Mr. Perkins, bowing and retiring. He heard little Lucy sobbing in a corner. He was lost at once—lost in love; he felt as if he could combat fifty generals! he never was so happy in his life.

The supper came; but as that meal cost five shillings a head, General Gorgon dismissed the four spinsters of his family home-wards in the carriage, and so saved himself a pound. This added to Jack Perkins's wrath; he had hoped to have seen Miss Lucy once more. He was a steward, and, in the general's teeth, would have done his duty. He was thinking how he would have helped her to the most delicate chicken-wings and *blanc-manges*, how he *would* have made her take champagne. Under the noses of indignant aunt and uncle, what glorious fun it would have been!

Out of place as Mr. Scully's present was, and though Lady Gorgon and her party sneered at the vulgar notion of venison and turtle for supper, all the world at Oldborough ate very greedily of those two substantial dishes; and the mayor's wife became from that day fourth a mortal enemy of the Gorgons: for, sitting near her ladyship, who refused the proffered soup and meat, the mayoress thought herself obliged to follow this disagreeable example. She sent away the plate of turtle with a sigh, saying, however, to the baronet's lady, 'I thought, mem, that the *Lord Mayor of London* always had turtle to his supper?'

'And what if he didn't, Biddy?' said his honour the mayor; 'a good thing's a good thing, and here goes!' wherewith he plunged his spoon into the savoury mess. The mayoress, as we have said, dared not; but she hated Lady Gorgon, and remembered it at the next election.

The pride, in fact, and insolence of the Gorgon party rendered every person in the room hostile to them; so soon as, gorged with meat, they began to find that courage which Britons invariably derive from their vituals. The show of the Gorgon plate seemed to offend the people. The Gorgon champagne was a long time, too, in making its appearance. Arrive, however, it did. The people were waiting for it. The young ladies, not accustomed to

that drink, declined pledging their admirers until it was produced ; the men, too, despised the bucellas and sherry, and were looking continually towards the door. At last, Mr. Rincer, the landlord, Mr. Hock, Sir George's butler, and sundry others entered the room. Bang went the corks—fizz the foamy liquor sparkled into all sorts of glasses that were held out for its reception. Mr. Hock helped Sir George and his party, who drank with great gusto ; the wine which was administered to the persons immediately around Mr. Scully was likewise pronounced to be good. But Mr. Perkins, who had taken his seat among the humbler individuals, and in the very middle of the table, observed that all these persons after drinking, made to each other very wry and ominous faces, and whispered much. He tasted his wine—it was a villainous compound of sugar, vitriol, soda, water, and green gooseberries. At this moment a great clatter of forks was made by the president's and vice-president's party. Silence for a toast—'twas silence all.

'Landlord,' said Mr. Perkins, starting up (the rogue, where did his impudence come from?) 'have you any champagne of *your own* ?'

'Silence ! down !' roared the Tories, the ladies looking aghast. 'Silence, sit down, you !' shrieked the well-known voice of the general.

'I beg your pardon, General,' said young John Perkins ; 'but where *could* you have bought this champagne ? My worthy friend I know is going to propose the ladies ; let us at any rate drink such a toast in good wine.' ('Hear, hear !') 'Drink her ladyship's health in *this* stuff ? I declare to goodness I would sooner drink it in beer !'

No pen can describe the uproar which arose : the anguish or the Gorgonites—the shrieks, jeers, cheers, ironic cries of 'Swipes,' etc., which proceeded from the less genteel but more enthusiastic Scullyites.

'This vulgarity is too much,' said Lady Gorgon, rising ; and Mrs. Mayoress and the ladies of the party did so too.

The General, two squires, the clergyman, the Gorgon apothecary and attorney, with their respective ladies, followed her : they were plainly beaten from the field. Such of the Tories as dared, remained, and in inglorious compromise shared the jovial Whig feast.

'Gentlemen and ladies,' hiccoughed Mr. Heeltap, 'I'll give you a toast. "Champagne to our real—hic—friends," no, "Real champagne to our friends," and—hic—pooh ! "Champagne to our friends, and real pain to our enemies,"—huzzay !'

The Scully faction on this day bore the victory away, and if the polite reader has been shocked by certain vulgarities on the part of Mr. Scully and his friends, he must remember *inprimis* that Oldborough was an inconsiderable place—that the inhabitants thereof were chiefly tradespeople, not of refined habits—that Mr. Scully himself had only for three months mingled among the aristocracy—that his young friend Perkins was violently angry—and finally, and to conclude, that the proud vulgarity of the great Sir George Gorgon and his family was infinitely more odious and contemptible than the mean vulgarity of the Scullyites and their leader.

Immediately after this event, Mr. Scully and his young friend, Perkins, returned to town; the latter to his garrets in Bedford Row—the former to his apartments on the first floor of the same house. He lived here to superintend his legal business, of which the London agents, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs, and Blatherwick, occupied the ground floor—the junior partner, Mr. Gustavus Blatherwick, occupying the second flat of the house. Scully made no secret of his profession or residence—he was an attorney, and proud of it—he was the grandson of a labourer, and thanked God for it—he had made his fortune by his own honest labour, and why should he be ashamed of it?

And now, having explained at full length who the several heroes and heroines of this history were, and how they conducted themselves in the country, let us describe their behaviour in London, and the great events which occurred there.

You must know that Mr. Perkins bore away the tenderest recollections of the young lady with whom he had danced at the Oldborough ball, and, having taken particular care to find out where she dwelt when in the metropolis, managed soon to become acquainted with Aunt Biggs, and made himself so amiable to that lady, that she begged he would pass all his disengaged evenings at her lodgings in Caroline Place. Mrs. Biggs was perfectly aware that the young gentleman did not come for her bohea and muffins, so much as for the sweeter conversation of her niece, Miss Gorgon; but seeing that these two young people were of an age when ideas of love and marriage will spring up, do what you will; seeing that her niece had a fortune, and Mr. Perkins had the prospect of a place, and was moreover a very amiable and well-disposed young fellow, she thought her niece could not do better than marry him; and Miss Gorgon thought so too. Now the public will be able to understand the meaning of that important conversation which is recorded at the very commencement of this history.

Lady Gorgon and her family were likewise in town; but when



in the metropolis, they never took notice of their relative, Miss Lucy; the idea of acknowledging an ex-schoolmistress, living in Mecklenburgh Square, being much too preposterous for a person of my Lady Gorgon's breeding and fashion. She did not, therefore, know of the progress which sly Perkins was making all this while; for Lucy Gorgon did not think it was at all necessary to inform her ladyship how deeply she was smitten by the wicked young gentleman, who had made all the disturbance at the Oldborough ball.

The intimacy of these young persons had, in fact, become so close, that on a certain sunshiny Sunday in December, after having accompanied Aunt Biggs to church, they had pursued their walk as far as that rendezvous of lovers, the Regent's Park, and were talking of their coming marriage with much confidential tenderness, before the bears in the Zoological Gardens.

Miss Lucy was ever and anon feeding those interesting animals with buns, to perform which act of charity she had clambered up on the parapet which surrounds their den. Mr. Perkins was below; and Miss Lucy, having distributed her buns, was on the point of following,—but whether from timidity, or whether from a desire to do young Perkins an essential service, I know not; however, she found herself quite unwilling to jump down unaided.

'My dearest John,' said she, 'I never can jump that.'

Whereupon John stepped up, put one hand round Lucy's waist; and as one of hers gently fell upon his shoulder, Mr. Perkins took the other and said—

'Now jump.'

Hoop! jump she did, and so excessively active and clever was Mr. John Perkins, that he jumped Miss Lucy plump into the middle of a group formed of—

Lady Gorgon,

The Misses Gorgon,

Master George Augustus Frederic Grimsby Gorgon,

And a footman, poodle, and French governess, who had all been for two or three minutes listening to the billings and cooings of these imprudent young lovers.



MR. PERKINS DISCOVERED IN THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

## CHAPTER II.

SHOWS HOW THE PLOT BEGAN TO THICKEN IN OR  
ABOUT BEDFORD ROW.

{ 'Miss Lucy !'

{ 'Upon my word !'

{ 'I'm hanged if it arn't Lucy ! How do, Lucy ?' uttered Lady, the Misses, and Master Gorgon in a breath.

Lucy came forward, bending down her ambrosial curls, and blushing, as a modest young woman should ; for, in truth, the scrape was very awkward, and as for John Perkins, he made a start, and then a step forwards, and then two backwards, and then began laying hands upon his black satin stock—in short, the sun did not shine at that moment upon a man who looked so exquisitely foolish.

'Miss Lucy Gorgon, is your aunt—is Mrs. Briggs here ?' said Gorgon, drawing herself up with much state.

'Mrs. Biggs, aunt,' said Lucy, demurely.

'Biggs or Briggs, madam, it is not of the slightest consequence. I presume that persons in my rank of life are not expected to know everybody's name in Madgeburg Square ?' (Lady Gorgon had a house in Baker Street, and a dismal house it was.) '*Not* here,' continued she, rightly interpreting Lucy's silence, 'NOT here ?—and may I ask how long it is that young ladies have been allowed to walk abroad without chaperons, and to—to take a part in such scenes as that which we have just seen acted ?'

To this question—and indeed it was rather difficult to answer—Miss Gorgon had no reply. There were the six grey eyes of her cousins glowering at her—there was George Augustus Frederic examining her with an air of extreme wonder, Mademoiselle the governess turning her looks demurely away, and awful Lady Gorgon glancing fiercely at her in front. Not mentioning the footman and poodle, what could a poor, modest, timid girl plead before such an inquisition, especially when she was clearly guilty ? Add to this, that as Lady Gorgon, that majestic woman, always remarkable for her size and insolence of demeanour, had planted herself in the middle of the path, and spoke at the extreme pitch of her voice, many persons walking in the neighbourhood had heard her ladyship's speech and stopped, and seemed disposed to await the rejoinder.

'For Heaven's sake, aunt, don't draw a crowd around us,' said

Lucy, who, indeed, was glad of the only escape that lay in her power. 'I will tell you of the—of the circumstances of—of my engagement with this gentleman—with Mr. Perkins,' added she, in a softer tone—so soft that the *'erkins* was quite inaudible.

'A Mr. What? An engagement without consulting your guardians!' screamed her ladyship, 'this must be looked to! Jerningham, call round my carriage. Mademoiselle, you will have the goodness to walk home with Master Gorgon, and carry him if you please, where there is wet; and, girls, as the day is fine, you will do likewise. Jerningham, you will attend the young ladies. Miss Gorgon, I will thank you to follow me immediately;' and so saying, and looking at the crowd with ineffable scorn, and at Mr. Perkins not at all, the lady bustled away forwards, the files of Gorgon daughters and governess closing round and enveloping poor Lucy, who found herself carried forward against her will, and in a minute seated in her aunt's coach, along with that tremendous person.

Her case was bad enough, but what was it to Perkins's? Fancy his blank surprise and rage at having his love thus suddenly ravished from him, and his delicious *tête-à-tête* interrupted. He managed, in an inconceivably short space of time, to conjure up half a million obstacles to his union. What should he do? he would rush on to Baker Street, and wait there until his Lucy left Lady Gorgon's house.

He could find no vehicle for him in the Regent's Park, and was in consequence obliged to make his journey on foot. Of course, he nearly killed himself with running, and ran so quick, that he was just in time to see the two ladies step out of Lady Gorgon's carriage at her own house, and to hear Jerningham's fellow-footman roar to the Gorgonian coachman, 'Half-past seven!' at which hour we are, to this day, convinced that Lady Gorgon was going out to dine. Mr. Jerningham's associate having banged to the door, with an insolent look towards Perkins, who was prying in with the most suspicious and indecent curiosity, retired, exclaiming, 'That chap has a hi to our great-coats, I reckon!' and left John Perkins to pace the street and be miserable.

John Perkins then walked resolutely up and down dismal Baker Street, determined on an *éclaircissement*. He was for some time occupied in thinking how it was that the Gorgons were not at church, they who made such a parade of piety; and John Perkins smiled as he passed the chapel, and saw that two *charity sermons* were to be preached that day—and therefore it was that General Gorgon read prayers to his family at home in the morning.

Perkins, at last, saw that little general, in blue frock-coat and

spotless buff gloves, saunter scowling home ; and half an hour before his arrival, had witnessed the entrance of Jerningham, and the three gaunt Miss Gorgons, poodle, son-and-heir, and French governess, protected by him, into Sir George's mansion.

'Can she be going to stay all night?' mused poor John, after being on the watch for three hours, 'that footman is the only person who has left the house,' when presently, to his inexpressible delight, he saw a very dirty hackney-coach clatter up to the Gorgon door, out of which first issued the ruby plush breeches and stalwart calves of Mr. Jerningham ; these were followed by his body, and then the gentleman, ringing modestly, was admitted.

Again the door opened—a lady came out, nor was she followed by the footman, who crossed his legs at the door-post, and allowed her to mount the jingling vehicle as best she might. Mr. Jerningham had witnessed the scene in the Park Gardens, had listened to the altercation through the library keyhole, and had been mighty sulky at being ordered to call a coach for this young woman. He did not therefore deign to assist her to mount.

But there was *one* who did ! Perkins was by the side of his Lucy : he had seen her start back, and cry, 'La, John !'—had felt her squeeze his arm—had mounted with her into the coach, and then shouted with a voice of thunder to the coachman, 'Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square.'

But Mr. Jerningham would have been much more surprised and puzzled if he had waited one minute longer, and seen this Mr. Perkins, who had so gallantly escalated the hackney-coach, step out of it with the most mortified, miserable, chapfallen countenance possible.

The fact is, he had found poor Lucy sobbing fit to break her heart, and instead of consoling her, as he expected, he only seemed to irritate her further : for she said, 'Mr. Perkins—I beg—I insist, that you leave the carriage.' And when Perkins made some movement (which, not being in the vehicle at the time, we have never been able to comprehend), she suddenly sprang from the back-seat and began pulling at a large piece of cord which communicated with the wrist of the gentleman driving ; and, screaming to him at the top of her voice, bade him immediately stop.

This Mr. Coachman did, with a curious, puzzled, grinning air.

Perkins descended, and on being asked, 'Vere ham I to drive the young 'oman, sir?' I am sorry to say muttered something like an oath, and uttered the above-mentioned words, 'Caroline Place, Mecklenburgh Square,' in a tone which I should be inclined to describe as both dogged and sheepish—very different from that cheery voice which he had used when he first gave the order.



Poor Lucy, in the course of those fatal three hours which had passed while Mr. Perkins was pacing up and down Baker Street, had received a lecture which lasted exactly one hundred and eighty minutes—from her aunt first, then from her uncle, whom we have seen marching homewards, and often from both together.

Sir George Gorgon and his lady poured out such a flood of advice and abuse against the poor girl, that she came away from the interview quite timid and cowering; and when she saw John Perkins (the sly rogue! how well he thought he had managed the trick!) she shrank from him as if he had been a demon of wickedness, ordered him out of the carriage, and went home by herself, convinced that she had committed some tremendous sin.

While, then, her coach jingled away to Caroline Place, Perkins, once more alone, bent his steps in the same direction. A desperate heart-stricken man—he passed by the beloved's door—saw lights in the front drawing-room—felt probably that she was there—but he could not go in. Moodily he paced down Doughty Street, and turning abruptly into Bedford Row, rushed into his own chambers, where Mrs. Snooks, the laundress, had prepared his humble sabbath meal.

A cheerful fire blazed in his garret, and Mrs. Snooks had prepared for him the favourite blade-bone he loved (blest four-days' dinner for a bachelor, roast, cold, hashed, grilled blade-bone, the fourth being better than the first); but although he usually did rejoice in this meal, ordinarily, indeed, grumbling that there was not enough to satisfy him—he, on this occasion, after two mouthfuls, flung down his knife and fork, and buried his two claws in his hair.

'Snooks,' said he at last, very moodily, 'remove this d——mutton, give me my writing things, and some hot brandy-and-water.'

This was done without much alarm, for you must know that Perkins used to dabble in poetry, and ordinarily prepared himself for composition by this kind of stimulus.

He wrote hastily a few lines.

'Snooks, put on your bonnet,' said he, 'and carry this—you know where!' he added, in such a hollow, heart-breaking tone of voice, that affected poor Snooks almost to tears. She went, however, with the note, which was to this purpose:—

'Lucy! Lucy! my soul's love—what, what has happened? I am writing this (*a gulp of brandy-and-water*) in a state bordering on distraction—madness—insanity (*another*). Why did you send me out of the coach in that cruel, cruel way? Write to me a word, a line—tell me, tell me, I may come to you—and leave me not in this agonising condition; your faithful (*glog—glog—glog, —the whole glass.*)  
J. P.'

He never signed John Perkins in full—he couldn't, it was so unromantic.

Well, this missive was despatched by Mrs. Snooks, and Perkins, in a fearful state of excitement, haggard, wild, and with more brandy-and-water, awaited the return of his messenger.

When at length, after an absence of about forty years, as it seemed to him, the old lady returned with a large packet, Perkins seized it with a trembling hand, and was yet more frightened to see the handwriting of Mrs. or Miss Biggs.

'MY DEAR MR. PERKINS,' she began, 'although I am not your soul's adored, I performed her part for once, since I have read your letter, as I told her;—you need not be very much alarmed, although Lucy is at this moment in bed and unwell, for the poor girl has had a sad scene at her grand uncle's house in Baker Street, and came home very much affected. Rest, however, will restore her, for she is not one of your nervous sort, and I hope when you come in the morning, you will see her as blooming as she was when you went out to-day on that unlucky walk.

'See what Sir George Gorgon says of us all! You won't challenge him, I know, as he is to be your uncle, and so I may show you his letter.

'Good-night, my dear John; do not go *quite* distracted before morning; and believe me your loving aunt, BARBARA BIGGS.'

BAKER STREET, 11th December.

'MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE GORGON has heard with the utmost disgust and surprise of the engagement which Miss Lucy Gorgon has thought fit to form.

'The Major-General cannot conceal his indignation at the share which Miss Biggs has taken in this disgraceful transaction.

'Sir George Gorgon puts an absolute veto upon all further communication between his niece and the low-born adventurer who has been admitted into her society, and begs to say that Lieutenant Fitch, of the Life Guards, is the gentleman who he intends shall marry Miss Gorgon.

'It is the Major-General's wish that on the 28th Miss Gorgon should be ready to come to his house, in Baker Street, where she will be more safe from impertinent intrusions than she has been in Mucklebury Square.

'Mrs. Biggs.

'Caroline Place,

'Mecklenburgh Square.'

When poor John Perkins read this epistle, blank rage and wonder filled his soul, at the audacity of the little general, who thus, without the smallest title in the world, pretended to dispose of the hand and fortune of his niece. The fact is, that Sir George had such a transcendent notion of his own dignity and station, that it never for a moment entered his head that his niece, or anybody else connected with him, should take a single step in life without previously receiving his orders, and Mr. Fitch, a baronet's son, having expressed an admiration of Lucy, Sir George had determined that his suit should be accepted, and really considered Lucy's preference of another as downright treason.

John Perkins determined on the death of Fitch as the very least reparation that should satisfy him; and vowed too that some of the general's blood should be shed for the words which he had dared to utter.

We have said that William Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P., occupied the first floor of Mr. Perkins's house in Bedford Row; and the reader is further to be informed that an immense friendship had sprung up between these two gentlemen. The fact is, that poor John was very much flattered by Scully's notice, and began in a very short time to fancy himself a political personage; for he had made several of Scully's speeches, written more than one letter from him to his constituents, and, in a word, acted as his gratis clerk. At least a guinea a week did Mr. Perkins save to the pockets of Mr. Scully, and with hearty goodwill too, for he adored the great William Pitt, and believed every word that dropped from the pompous lips of that gentleman.

Well, after having discussed Sir George Gorgon's letter, poor Perkins, in the utmost fury of mind that his darling should be slandered so, feeling a desire for fresh air, determined to descend to the garden, and smoke a cigar in that rural, quiet spot. The night was very calm. The moonbeams slept softly upon the herbage of Gray's Inn gardens, and bathed with silver splendour Tibbald's Row. A million of little frisky twinkling stars attended their queen, who looked with bland round face upon their gambols, as they peeped in and out from the azure heavens. Along Gray's Inn wall a lazy row of cabs stood listlessly, for who would call a cab on such a night? Meanwhile their drivers, at the alehouse near, smoked the short pipe or quaffed the foaming beer. Perhaps from Gray's Inn Lane some broken sounds of Irish revelry might rise. Issuing perhaps from Raymond Buildings gate, six lawyers' clerks might whoop a tipsy song—or the loud watchman yell the passing hour—but beyond this all was silent, and young Perkins, as he sat in the summer-house at the bottom of the garden, and

contemplated the peaceful heaven, felt some influences of it entering into his soul, and almost forgetting revenge, thought but of peace and love.

Presently, he was aware there was some one else pacing the garden. Who could it be?—not Blatherwick, for he passed the sabbath with his grandmamina at Clapham—not Scully surely, for he always went to Bethesda Chapel, and to a select prayer-meeting afterwards. Alas! it *was* Scully—for though that gentleman *said* that he went to chapel, we have it for a fact that he did not always keep his promise, and was at this moment employed in rehearsing an extempore speech which he proposed to deliver at St. Stephen's.

'Had I, sir,' spouted he, with folded arms, slowly pacing to and fro, 'Had I, sir, entertained the smallest possible intention of addressing the House on the present occasion—hum, on the present occasion—I would have endeavoured to prepare myself in a way that should have at least shown my sense of the greatness of the subject before the House's consideration, and the nature of the distinguished audience I have the honour to address. I am, sir, a plain man—born of the people—myself one of the people, having won, thank Heaven, an honourable fortune and position by my own honest labour; and standing here as I do——'

Here Mr. Scully (it may be said that he never made a speech without bragging about himself, and an excellent plan it is, for people cannot help believing you at last)—here, I say, Mr. Scully, who had one arm raised, felt himself suddenly tipped on the shoulder, and heard a voice saying, 'Your money or your life!'

The honourable gentleman twirled round as if he had been shot—the papers on which a great part of this impromptu was written dropped from his lifted hand, and some of them were actually borne on the air into neighbouring gardens. The man was, in fact, in the direst fright.

'It's only I,' said Perkins, with rather a forced laugh, when he saw the effect that his wit had produced.

'Only you! And pray what the dev—— what right have you to—to come upon a man of my rank in that way, and disturb me in the midst of very important meditations?' asked Mr. Scully, beginning to grow fierce.

'I want your advice,' said Perkins, 'on a matter of the very greatest importance to me. You know my idea of marrying?'

'Marry!' said Scully; 'I thought you had given up that silly scheme. And how, pray, do you intend to live?'

'Why, my intended has a couple of hundreds a year, and my clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office will be as much more.'

‘Clerkship—Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office—government sinecure!—Why, good Heavens! John Perkins, you don’t tell *me* that you are going to accept any such thing?’

‘It is a very small salary, certainly,’ said John, who had a decent notion of his own merits; ‘but consider, six months’ vacation, two hours in the day, and those spent over the newspapers. After all, it’s——’

‘After all, it’s a swindle,’ roared out Mr. Scully—‘a swindle upon the country; an infamous tax upon the people, who starve that you may fatten in idleness. But take this clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office,’ continued the patriot, his bosom heaving with noble indignation, and his eye flashing the purest fire,—‘*Take* this clerkship, John Perkins, and sanction tyranny by becoming one of its agents; sanction dishonesty by sharing in its plunder—do this, **BUT** never more be friend of mine. Had I a child,’ said the patriot, clasping his hands and raising his eyes to heaven, ‘I would rather see him—dead, sir—dead, dead at my feet, than the servant of a government which all honest men despise;’ and here, giving a searching glance at Perkins, Mr. Scully began tramping up and down the garden in a perfect fury.

‘Good Heavens!’ exclaimed the timid John Perkins—‘don’t say so. My dear Mr. Scully, I’m not the dishonest character you suppose me to be—I never looked at the matter in this light. I’ll—I’ll consider of it. I’ll tell Crampton that I will give up the place; but for Heaven’s sake, don’t let me forfeit *your* friendship, which is dearer to me than any place in the world.’

Mr. Scully pressed his hand, and said nothing; and though their interview lasted a full half-hour longer, during which they paced up and down the gravel walk, we shall not breathe a single syllable of their conversation, as it has nothing to do with our tale.

The next morning, after an interview with Miss Lucy, John Perkins, Esq., was seen to issue from Mrs. Biggs’s house, looking particularly pale, melancholy, and thoughtful; and he did not stop until he reached a certain door in Downing Street, where was the office of a certain great minister, and the offices of the clerks in his lordship’s department.

The head of them was Mr. Josiah Crampton, who has now to be introduced to the public. He was a little old gentleman, some sixty years of age, maternal uncle to John Perkins; a bachelor, who had been about forty-two years employed in the department of which he was now the head.

After waiting four hours in an anteroom, where a number of Irishmen, some newspaper-editors, many pompous-looking political



personages, asking for the 'first lord': a few sauntering clerks, and numbers of swift active messengers passed to and fro. After waiting for four hours, making drawings on the blotting-book, and reading the *Morning Post* for that day week, Mr. Perkins was informed that he might go into his uncle's room, and did so accordingly.

He found a little hard old gentleman seated at a table covered with every variety of sealing-wax, blotting-paper, envelopes, despatch-boxes, green tapers, etc., etc. An immense fire was blazing in the grate, an immense sheet-almanac hung over that, a screen, three or four chairs, and a faded Turkey carpet, formed the rest of the furniture of this remarkable room, which I have described thus particularly, because, in the course of a long official life, I have remarked that such is the invariable decoration of political rooms.

'Well, John,' said the little hard old gentleman, pointing to an arm-chair, 'I'm told you've been here since eleven. Why the deuce do you come so early?'

'I had important business,' answered Mr. Perkins stoutly; and as his uncle looked up with a comical expression of wonder, John began in a solemn tone to deliver a little speech which he had composed, and which proved him to be a very worthy, easy, silly fellow.

'Sir,' said Mr. Perkins, 'you have known for some time past the nature of my political opinions, and the intimacy which I have had the honour to form with one—with some of the leading members of the Liberal Party.' (A grin from Mr. Crampton.) 'When first, by your kindness, I was promised the clerkship in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office, my opinions were not formed as they are now; and having taken the advice of the gentlemen with whom I act,—(an enormous grin),—the advice, I say, of the gentlemen with whom I act, and the counsel likewise of my own conscience, I am compelled, with the deepest grief, to say, my dear uncle, that I—I——'

'That you—what, sir?' exclaimed little Mr. Crampton, bouncing off his chair. 'You don't mean to say that you are such a fool as to decline the place?'

'I do decline the place,' said Perkins, whose blood rose at the word 'fool.' 'As a man of honour, I cannot take it.'

'Not take it! and how are you to live? On the rent of that house of yours? For by gad, sir, if you give up the clerkship, I never will give you a shilling.'

'It cannot be helped,' said Mr. Perkins, looking as much like a martyr as he possibly could, and thinking himself a very fine

fellow. 'I have talents, sir, which I hope to cultivate; and am member of a profession by which a man may hope to rise to the very highest offices of the state.'

'Profession, talents, offices of the state! Are you mad, John Perkins, that you come to me with such insufferable twaddle as this? Why, do you think if you *had* been capable of rising at the bar I would have taken so much trouble about getting you a place? No, sir; you are too fond of pleasure, and bed, and tea-parties, and small-talk, and reading novels, and playing the flute, and writing sonnets. You would no more rise at the bar than my messenger, sir; it was because I knew your disposition—that hopeless, careless, irresolute good-humour of yours, that I had determined to keep you out of danger, by placing you in a snug shelter, where the storms of the world would not come near you. You must have principles, forsooth! and you must marry Miss Gorgon, of course; and by the time you have gone ten circuits, and had six children, you will have eaten up every shilling of your wife's fortune, and be as briefless as you are now. Who the deuce has put all this nonsense into your head? I think I know.'

Mr. Perkins's ears tingled as these hard words saluted them; and he scarcely knew whether he ought to knock his uncle down or fall at his feet, and say, 'Uncle, I have been a fool, and I know it.' The fact is, that in his interview with Miss Gorgon and her aunt in the morning, when he came to tell them of the resolution he had formed to give up the place, both the ladies and John himself had agreed, with a thousand rapturous tears and exclamations, that he was one of the noblest young men that ever lived, had acted as became himself, and might with perfect propriety give up the place, his talents being so prodigious that no power on earth could hinder him from being Lord Chancellor. Indeed John and Lucy had always thought the clerkship quite beneath him, and were not a little glad, perhaps, at finding a pretext for decently refusing it. But as Perkins was a young gentleman whose candour was such that he was always swayed by the opinions of the last speaker, he did begin to feel now the truth of his uncle's statements, however disagreeable they might be.

Mr. Crampton continued:—

'I think I know the cause of your patriotism. Has not William Pitt Scully, Esq., had something to do with it?'

Mr. Perkins *could* not turn any redder than he was, but confessed with deep humiliation that 'he *had* consulted Mr. Scully among other friends.'

Mr. Crampton smiled—drew a letter from a heap before him,

and tearing off the signature, handed over the document to his nephew. It contained the following paragraphs:—

‘Hawksby has sounded Scully: we can have him any day we want him. He talks very big at present, and says he would not take anything under a . . . This is absurd. He has a Yorkshire nephew coming up to town, and wants a place for him. There is one vacant in the Tape Office, he says: have you not a promise of it?’

‘I can’t—I can’t believe it,’ said John; ‘this, sir, is some weak invention of the enemy. Scully is the most honourable man breathing.’

‘Mr. Scully is a gentleman in a very fair way to make a fortune,’ answered Mr. Crampton. ‘Look you, John,—it is just as well for your sake that I should give you the news a few weeks before the papers, for I don’t want you to be ruined, if I can help it, as I don’t wish to have you on my hands. We know all the particulars of Scully’s history. He was a Tory attorney at Old-borough; he was jilted by the present Lady Gorgon; turned Radical, and fought Sir George in his own borough. Sir George would have had the peerage he is dying for, had he not lost that second seat (by the bye, my lady will be here in five minutes), and Scully is now quite firm there. Well, my dear lad, we have bought your incorruptible Scully. Look here,’—and Mr. Crampton produced three *Morning Posts*.

“‘THE HONOURABLE HENRY HAWKSBY’S DINNER PARTY.—Lord So-and-So—Duke of So-and-So—W. Pitt Scully, Esq., M.P.”

‘Hawksby is our neutral, our dinner-giver.

“‘LADY DIANA DOLDRUM’S ROUT.—W. Pitt Scully, Esq.,” again.

“‘THE EARL OF MANTRAP’S GRAND DINNER.—A duke—four lords—Mr. Scully, and *Sir George Gorgon*.”’

‘Well, but I don’t see how you have bought him; look at his votes.’

‘My dear John,’ said Mr. Crampton, jingling his watch-seals very complacently, ‘I am letting you into fearful secrets. The great common end of party is to buy your opponents—the great statesman buys them for nothing.’

Here the attendant genius of Mr. Crampton made his appearance, and whispered something, to which the little gentleman said, ‘Show her ladyship in,’—when the attendant disappeared.

‘John,’ said Mr. Crampton, with a very queer smile, ‘you can’t stay in this room while Lady Gorgon is with me; but there is a

little clerk's room behind the screen there, where you can wait until I call you.'

John retired, and as he closed the door of communication, strange to say, little Mr. Crampton sprang up and said, 'Confound the young ninny, he has shut the door!'

Mr. Crampton then, remembering that he wanted a map in the next room, sprang into it, left the door half open in coming out, and was in time to receive her ladyship with smiling face as she, ushered by Mr. Strongitharm, majestically sailed in.

### CHAPTER III.

IN issuing from, and leaving open, the door of the inner room, Mr. Crampton had bestowed upon Mr. Perkins a look so peculiarly arch, that even he, simple as he was, began to imagine that some mystery was about to be cleared up, or some mighty matter to be discussed. Presently he heard the well-known voice of Lady Gorgon in conversation with his uncle. What could their talk be about? Mr. Perkins was dying to know, and, shall we say it? advanced to the door on tiptoe and listened with all his might.

Her ladyship, that Juno of a woman, if she had not borrowed Venus's girdle to render herself irresistible, at least had adopted a tender, coaxing, wheedling, frisky tone, quite different from her ordinary dignified style of conversation. She called Mr. Crampton a naughty man, for neglecting his old friends, vowed that Sir George was quite hurt at his not coming to dine—nor fixing a day when he would come—and added with a most engaging ogle, that she had three fine girls at home, who would perhaps make an evening pass pleasantly, even to such a gay bachelor as Mr. Crampton.

'Madam,' said he, with much gravity, 'the daughters of such a mother must be charming; but I, who have seen your ladyship, am, alas! proof against even them.'

Both parties here heaved tremendous sighs, and affected to be wonderfully unhappy about something.

'I wish,' after a pause, said Lady Gorgon—'I wish, dear Mr. Crampton, you would not use that odious title "my ladyship"; you know it always makes me melancholy.'

'Melancholy, my dear Lady Gorgon; and why?'

‘Because it makes me think of another title that ought to have been mine—ours (I speak for dear Sir George’s and my darling boy’s sake, heaven knows, not mine). What a sad disappointment it has been to my husband, that after all his services, all the promises he has had, they have never given him his peerage. As for me, you know——’

‘For you, my dear madam, I know quite well that you care for no such bauble as a coronet, except in so far as it may confer honour upon those most dear to you—excellent wife and noble mother as you are. Heigho! what a happy man is Sir George!’

Here there was another pause, and if Mr. Perkins could have seen what was taking place behind the screen, he would have beheld little Mr. Crampton looking into Lady Gorgon’s face, with as love-sick a Romeo-gaze as he could possibly counterfeit; while her ladyship, blushing somewhat and turning her own grey goggles up to heaven, received all his words for gospel, and sat fancying herself to be the best, most meritorious, and most beautiful creature in the three kingdoms.

‘You men are terrible flatterers,’ continued she; ‘but you say right; for myself, I value not these empty distinctions. I am growing old, Mr. Crampton,—yes, indeed I am, although you smile so incredulously,—and let me add, that *my* thoughts are fixed upon *higher* things than earthly crowns. But tell me, you who are all-in-all with Lord Bagwig, are we never to have our peerage? His Majesty, I know, is not averse; the services of dear Sir George to a member of His Majesty’s august family, I know, have been appreciated in the highest quarter. Ever since the peace we have had a promise. Four hundred pounds has Sir George spent at the heralds’ office (I, myself, am of one of the most ancient families in the kingdom, Mr. Crampton), and the poor dear man’s health is really ruined by the anxious, sickening feeling of hope so long delayed.’

Mr. Crampton now assumed an air of much solemnity.

‘My dear Lady Gorgon,’ said he, ‘will you let me be frank with you, and will you promise solemnly that what I am going to tell you shall never be repeated to a single soul?’

Lady Gorgon promised.

‘Well, then, since the truth you must know, you yourselves have been in part the cause of the delay of which you complain. You gave us two votes five years ago, you now only give us one. If Sir George were to go up to the Peers, we should lose even that one vote; and would it be common sense in us to incur such a loss? Mr. Scully, the Liberal, would return another member of



his own way of thinking, and as for the Lords, we have, you know, a majority there.'

'Oh, that horrid man!' said Lady Gorgon, cursing Mr. Scully in her heart, and beginning to play a rapid tattoo with her feet, 'that miscreant, that traitor, that—that attorney has been our ruin.'

'Horrid man, if you please; but give me leave to tell you that the horrid man is not the sole cause of your ruin—if ruin you will call it. I am sorry to say that I do candidly think ministers think that Sir George Gorgon has lost his influence in Oldborough as much through his own fault as through Mr. Scully's cleverness.'

'Our own fault! Good heavens! Have we not done everything—everything that persons of our station in the county could do, to keep those misguided men? Have we not remonstrated, threatened, taken away our custom from the mayor, established a Conservative apothecary—in fact done all that gentlemen could do? But these are such times, Mr. Crampton; the spirit of revolution is abroad, and the great families of England are menaced by democratic insolence.'

This was Sir George Gorgon's speech always after dinner, and was delivered by his lady with a great deal of stateliness. Somewhat, perhaps, to her annoyance, Mr. Crampton only smiled, shook his head, and said—

'Nonsense, my dear Lady Gorgon—pardon the phrase, but I am a plain old man, and call things by their names. Now, will you let me whisper in your ear one word of truth? You have tried all sorts of remonstrances, and exerted yourself to maintain your influence in every way, except the right one, and that is——'

'What, in Heaven's name?'

'Conciliation. We know your situation in the borough. Mr. Scully's whole history, and, pardon me for saying so (but we men in office know everything), yours——'

Lady Gorgon's ears and cheeks now assumed the hottest hue of crimson. She thought of her former passages with Scully, and of the days when—but never mind when, for she suffered her veil to fall, and buried her head in the folds of her handkerchief. Vain folds! The wily little Mr. Crampton could see all that passed behind the cambric, and continued—

'Yes, madam, we know the absurd hopes that were formed by a certain attorney twenty years since. We know how, up to this moment, he boasts of certain walks——'

'With the governess—we were always with the governess!' shrieked out Lady Gorgon, clasping her hands. She was not the wisest of women.

‘With the governess, of course,’ said Mr. Crampton firmly. ‘Do you suppose that any man dare breathe a syllable against your spotless reputation? Never, my dear madam; but what I would urge is this—you have treated your disappointed admirer too cruelly.’

‘What! the traitor who has robbed us of our rights?’

‘He never would have robbed you of your rights if you had been more kind to him. You should be gentle, madam; you should forgive him—you should be friends with him.’

‘With a traitor, never!’

‘Think what made him a traitor, Lady Gorgon; look in your glass, and say if there be not some excuse for him? Think of the feelings of the man who saw beauty such as yours—I am a plain man and must speak—Virtue such as yours, in the possession of a rival. By heavens, madam, I think he was *right* to hate Sir George Gorgon! Would you have him allow such a prize to be ravished from him without a pang on his part?’

‘He was, I believe, very much attached to me,’ said Lady Gorgon, quite delighted; ‘but you must be aware that a young man of his station in life could not look up to a person of my rank.’

‘Surely not; it was monstrous pride and arrogance in Mr. Scully; but *que voulez vous?* Such is the world’s way—Scully could not help loving you—who that knows you can? I am a plain man, and say what I think. He loves you still. Why make an enemy of him, who would at a word be at your feet? Dearest Lady Gorgon, listen to me. Sir George Gorgon and Mr. Scully have already met—their meeting was our contrivance; it is for our interest, for yours, that they should be friends. If there were two Ministerial members for Oldborough, do you think your husband’s peerage would be less secure? I am not at liberty to tell you all I know on this subject; but do, I entreat you, be reconciled to him.’

And after a little more conversation, which was carried on by Mr. Crampton in the same tender way, this important interview closed, and Lady Gorgon, folding her shawl round her, threaded certain mysterious passages, and found her way to her carriage in Whitehall.

‘I hope you have not been listening, you rogue,’ said Mr. Crampton to his nephew, who blushed most absurdly by way of answer. ‘You would have heard great state secrets, if you had dared to do so. That woman is perpetually here, and if peerages are to be had for the asking, she ought to have been a duchess by this time. I would not have admitted her but for a reason that I have. Go you now and ponder upon what you have heard and

seen. Be on good terms with Scully, and above all, speak not a word concerning our interview—no, not a word even to your mistress. By the way, I presume, sir, you will recall your resignation?’

The bewildered Perkins was about to stammer out a speech, when his uncle, cutting it short, pushed him gently out of the door.

At the period when the important events occurred which have been recorded here, parties ran very high, and a mighty struggle for the vacant Speakership was about to come on. The Right Honourable Robert Pincher was the Ministerial candidate, and Sir Charles Macabaw was patronised by the Opposition. The two members for Oldborough of course took different sides, the baronet being of the Pincher faction, while Mr. William Pitt Scully strongly supported the Macabaw party.

It was Mr. Scully's intention to deliver an impromptu speech upon the occasion of the election, and he and his faithful Perkins prepared it between them; for the latter gentleman had wisely kept his uncle's counsel and his own, and Mr. Scully was quite ignorant of the conspiracy that was brooding. Indeed, so artfully had that young Machiavel of a Perkins conducted himself, that when asked by his patron whether he had given up his place in the Tape-and-Sealing-Wax Office, he replied that ‘he *had* tendered his resignation,’ but did not say one word about having recalled it.

‘You were right, my boy, quite right,’ said Mr. Scully; ‘a man of uncompromising principles should make no compromise’; and herewith he sat down and wrote off a couple of letters, one to Mr. Ringwood, telling him that the place in the Sealing-Wax Office was, as he had reason to know, vacant; and the other to his nephew, stating that it was to be his. ‘Under the rose, my dear Bob,’ added Mr. Scully, ‘it will cost you five hundred pounds, but you cannot invest your money better.’

It is needless to state that the affair was to be conducted ‘with the strictest secrecy and honour,’ and that the money was to pass through Mr. Scully's hands.

While, however, the great Pincher and Macabaw question was yet undecided, an event occurred to Mr. Scully which had a great influence upon his after-life. A second grand banquet was given at the Earl of Mantrap's: Lady Mantrap requested him to conduct Lady Gorgon to dinner; and the latter, with a charming timidity, and a gracious melancholy look into his face (after which her veined eyelids veiled her azure eyes), put her hand into the

trembling one of Mr. Scully, and said, as much as looks could say, 'Forgive and forget.'

Down went Scully to dinner: there were dukes on his right hand and earls on his left; there were but two persons without title in the midst of that glittering assemblage; the very servants looked like noblemen, the cook had done wonders, the wines were cool and rich, and Lady Gorgon was splendid! What attention did everybody pay to her and to him! Why *would* she go on gazing into his face with that tender imploring look? In other words, Scully, after partaking of soup and fish (he, during their discussion, had been thinking over all the former love-and-hate passages between himself and Lady Gorgon), turned very red, and began talking to her.

'Were you not at the opera on Tuesday?' began he, assuming at once the airs of a man of fashion. 'I thought I caught a glimpse of you in the Duchess of Diddlebury's box.'

'Opera, Mr. Scully?' (pronouncing the word 'Scully' with the utmost softness). 'Ah, no! we seldom go, and yet too often. For serious persons the enchantments of that place are too dangerous—I am so nervous—so delicate; the smallest trifle so agitates, depresses, or irritates me, that I dare not yield myself up to the excitement of music. I am too passionately attached to it; and shall I tell you, it has such a strange influence upon me, that the smallest false note almost drives me to distraction, and for that very reason I hardly ever go to a concert or a ball.'

'Egad,' thought Scully, 'I recollect when she would dance down a matter of five and forty couple, and jingle away at the "Battle of Prague" all day.'

She continued, 'Don't you recollect, I do—with, oh, what regret!—that day at Oldborough race-ball, when I behaved with such sad rudeness to you; you will scarcely believe me, and yet I assure you 'tis the fact, the music had made me almost mad; do let me ask your pardon for my conduct, I was not myself. Oh, Mr. Scully! I am no worldly woman; I know my duties, and I feel my wrongs. Nights and nights have I lain awake weeping and thinking of that unhappy day. That I should ever speak so to an old friend, for we *were* old friends, were we not?'

Scully did not speak; but his eyes were bursting out of his head, and his face was the exact colour of a deputy-lieutenant's uniform.

'That I should ever forget myself and you so! How I have been longing for this opportunity to ask you to forgive me! I asked Lady Mantrap, when I heard you were to be here, to invite me to her party. Come, I know you will forgive me—your eyes

say you will. You used to look so in old days, and forgive me my caprices *then*. Do give me a little wine—we will drink to the memory of old days.'

Her eyes filled with tears, and poor Scully's hand caused such a rattling and trembling of the glass and the decanter that the Duke of Doldrum, who had been, during the course of this whispered sentimentality, describing a famous run with the Queen's hounds at the top of his voice—stopped at the jingling of the glass, and his tale was lost for ever. Scully hastily drank his wine, and Lady Gorgon turned round to her next neighbour, a little gentleman in black, between whom and herself certain conscious looks passed.

'I am glad poor Sir George is not here,' said he, smiling.

Lady Gorgon said, 'Pooh, for shame!' The little gentleman was no other than Josiah Crampton, Esq., that eminent financier, and he was now going through the curious calculation which we mentioned in our last, and by which you *buy a man for nothing*. He intended to pay the very same price for Sir George Gorgon too, but there was no need to tell the baronet so; only of this the reader must be made aware.

While Mr. Crampton was conducting this intrigue, which was to bring a new recruit to the Ministerial ranks, his mighty spirit condescended to ponder upon subjects of infinitely less importance, and to arrange plans for the welfare of his nephew and the young woman to whom he had made a present of his heart. These young persons, as we said before, had arranged to live in Mr. Perkins's own house in Bedford Row. It was of a peculiar construction, and might more properly be called a house and a half; for a snug little tenement of four chambers protruded from the back of the house into the garden. These rooms communicated with the drawing-rooms occupied by Mr. Scully; and Perkins, who acted as his friend and secretary, used frequently to sit in the one nearest the member's study, in order that he might be close at hand to confer with that great man. The rooms had a private entrance too, were newly decorated, and in them the young couple proposed to live; the kitchen and garrets being theirs likewise. What more could they need? We are obliged to be particular in describing these apartments, for extraordinary events occurred therein.

To say the truth, until the present period, Mr. Crampton had taken no great interest in his nephew's marriage, or, indeed, in the young man himself. The old gentleman was of a saturnine turn, and inclined to undervalue the qualities of Mr. Perkins, which were idleness, simplicity, enthusiasm, and easy good-nature.

'Such fellows never do anything in the world,' he would say,



and for such he had accordingly the most profound contempt. But when, after John Perkins's repeated entreaties, he had been induced to make the acquaintance of Miss Gorgon, he became instantly charmed with her, and warmly espoused her cause against her overbearing relations.

At his suggestion she wrote back to decline Sir George Gorgon's peremptory invitation, and hinted at the same time that she had attained an age and a position which enabled her to be the mistress of her own actions. To this letter there came an answer from Lady Gorgon which we shall not copy, but which simply stated that Miss Lucy Gorgon's conduct was unchristian, ungrateful, unladylike, and immodest; that the Gorgon family disowned her for the future, and left her at liberty to form whatever base connections she pleased.

'A pretty world this!' said Mr. Crampton, in a great rage, when the letter was shown to him. 'This same fellow, Scully, dissuades my nephew from taking a place, because Scully wants it for himself. This prude of a Lady Gorgon cries out shame, and disowns an innocent amiable girl; she a heartless jilt herself once, and a heartless flirt now. The Pharisees, the Pharisees! And to call mine a base family too!'

Now, Lady Gorgon did not in the least know Mr. Crampton's connection with Mr. Perkins, or she would have been much more guarded in her language; but whether she knew it or not, the old gentleman felt a huge indignation, and determined to have his revenge.

'That's right, uncle! *Shall* I call Gorgon out?' said the impetuous young Perkins, who was all for blood.

'John, you are a fool,' said his uncle. 'You shall have a better revenge; you shall be married from Sir George Gorgon's house, and you shall see Mr. William Pitt Scully sold for nothing.' This to the veteran diplomatist seemed to be the highest triumph which man could possibly enjoy.

It was very soon to take place; and, as has been the case ever since the world began, woman, lovely woman, was to be the cause of Scully's fall. The tender scene at Lord Mantrap's was followed by many others equally sentimental. Sir George Gorgon called upon his colleague the very next day, and brought with him a card from Lady Gorgon inviting Mr. Scully to dinner. The attorney eagerly accepted the invitation, was received in Baker Street by the whole amiable family with much respectful cordiality, and was pressed to repeat his visits as country neighbours should. More than once did he call, and somehow always at the hour when Sir George was away at his club, or riding in the Park, or elsewhere engaged. Sir George Gorgon was very old, very feeble, very much

shattered in constitution. Lady Gorgon used to impart her fears to Mr. Scully every time he called there, and the sympathising attorney used to console her as best he might. Sir George's country agent neglected the property—his lady consulted Mr. Scully concerning it; he knew to a fraction how large her jointure was; how she was to have Gorgon Castle for her life; and how, in the event of the young baronet's death (he, too, was a sickly poor boy), the chief part of the estates, bought by her money, would be at her absolute disposal.

'What a pity these odious politics prevent me from having you for our agent,' would Lady Gorgon say; and indeed Scully thought it was a pity too. Ambitious Scully! what wild notions filled his brain. He used to take leave of Lady Gorgon and ruminate upon these things; and when he was gone, Sir George and her ladyship used to laugh.

'If we can but commit him—if we can but make him vote for Pincher,' said the General, 'my peerage is secure. Hawksby and Crampton as good as told me so.'

The point had been urged upon Mr. Scully repeatedly and adroitly. 'Is not Pincher a more experienced man than Macabaw?' would Sir George say to his guest over their wine. Scully allowed it. 'Can't you vote for him on personal grounds, and say so in the House?' Scully wished he could—how he wished he could! Every time the General coughed, Scully saw his friend's desperate situation more and more, and thought how pleasant it would be to be Lord of Gorgon Castle. 'Knowing my property,' cried Sir George, 'as you do, and with your talents and integrity, what a comfort it would be could I leave you as guardian to my boy! But these cursed politics prevent it, my dear fellow. Why *will* you be a Radical?' And Scully cursed politics too. 'Hang the low-bred rogue,' added Sir George, when William Pitt Scully, Esq., had left the house, 'he will do everything but promise.'

'My dear General'—said Lady Gorgon, sidling up to him and patting him on his old yellow cheek—'my dear Georgy, tell me one thing,—are you jealous?'

'Jealous, my dear! and jealous of *that* fellow—pshaw!'

'Well, then, give me leave, and you shall have the promise to-morrow.'

To-morrow arrived. It was a remarkably fine day, and in the forenoon Mr. Perkins gave his accustomed knock at Scully's study, which was only separated from his own sitting-room by a double door. John had wisely followed his uncle's advice, and was on the best terms with the honourable member.

'Here are a few sentences,' said he, 'which I think may suit your purpose. Great public services—undeniable merit—years of integrity—cause of Reform, and Macabaw for ever!' He put down the paper. It was, in fact, a speech in favour of Mr. Macabaw.

'Hush,' said Scully, rather surlily; for he was thinking how disagreeable it was to support Macabaw, and besides, there were clerks in the room, whom the thoughtless Perkins had not at first perceived. As soon as that gentleman saw them, 'You are busy, I see,' continued he, in a lower tone. 'I came to say that I must be off duty to-day, for I am engaged to take a walk with some ladies of my acquaintance.'

So saying, the light-hearted young man placed his hat uncere- moniously on his head, and went off through his own door, humming a song. He was in such high spirits that he did not even think of closing the doors of communication, and Scully looked after him with a sneer.

'Ladies, forsooth,' thought he, 'I know who they are. This precious girl that he is fooling with, for one, I suppose.' He was right: Perkins was off on the wings of love, to see Miss Lucy; and she and aunt Biggs and uncle Crampton had promised this very day to come and look at the apartments which Mrs. John Perkins was to occupy with her happy husband.

'Poor devil!' so continued Mr. Scully's meditations, 'it is almost too bad to do him out of his place; but my Bob wants it, and John's girl has, I hear, seven thousand pounds. His uncle will get him another place before all that money is spent'; and herewith Mr. Scully began conning the speech which Perkins had made for him.

He had not read it more than six times,—in truth, he was getting it by heart,—when his head clerk came to him from the front room, bearing a card; a footman had brought it, who said his lady was waiting below. Lady Gorgon's name was on the card! To seize his hat and rush downstairs was, with Mr. Scully, the work of an infinitesimal portion of time.

It was indeed Lady Gorgon in her Gorgonian chariot.

'Mr. Scully,' said she, popping her head out of window and smiling in a most engaging way, 'I want to speak to you on something very particular *indeed*'—and she held him out her hand. Scully pressed it most tenderly; he hoped all the heads in Bedford Row were at the windows to see him. 'I can't ask you into the carriage, for you see the governess is with me, and I want to talk secrets to you.'

'Shall I go and make a little promenade?' said mademoiselle innocently. And her mistress hated her for that speech.

‘No. Mr. Scully, I am sure, will let me come in for five minutes.’

Mr. Scully was only too happy. My lady descended and walked upstairs, leaning on the happy solicitor’s arm. But how should he manage? The front room was consecrated to clerks; there were clerks too, as ill-luck would have it, in his private room. ‘Perkins is out for the day,’ thought Scully; ‘I will take her into his room’; and into Perkins’s room he took her—ay, and he shut the double doors after him too, and trembled as he thought of his own happiness.

‘What a charming little study!’ said Lady Gorgon, seating herself. And indeed it was very pretty, for Perkins had furnished it beautifully, and laid out a neat tray with cakes, a cold fowl, and sherry, to entertain his party withal. ‘And do you bachelors always live so well?’ continued she, pointing to the little cold collation.

Mr. Scully looked rather blank when he saw it, and a dreadful suspicion crossed his soul; but there was no need to trouble Lady Gorgon with explanations; therefore, at once, and with much presence of mind, he asked her to partake of his bachelor’s fare (she would refuse Mr. Scully nothing that day). A pretty sight would it have been for young Perkins to see strangers so unceremoniously devouring his feast. She drank—Mr. Scully drank—and so emboldened was he by the draught that he actually seated himself by the side of Lady Gorgon on John Perkins’s new sofa!

Her ladyship had of course something to say to him. She was a pious woman, and had suddenly conceived a violent wish for building a chapel-of-ease at Oldborough, to which she entreated him to subscribe. She enlarged upon the benefits that the town would derive from it, spoke of Sunday schools, sweet spiritual instruction, and the duty of all well-minded persons to give aid to the scheme.

‘I will subscribe a hundred pounds,’ said Scully, at the end of her ladyship’s harangue: ‘would I not do anything for you?’

‘Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully,’ said the enthusiastic woman. (How the ‘dear’ went burning through his soul!) ‘Ah!’ added she, ‘if you *would* but do anything for me—if you, who are so eminently, so truly distinguished, in a religious point of view, would but see the truth in politics too; and if I could see your name among those of the true patriot party in this empire, how blest—oh! how blest should I be! Poor Sir George often says he should go to his grave happy, could he but see you the guardian of his boy; and I, your old friend (for we *were* friends, William), how have I wept to think of you as one of those who are bringing

our monarchy to ruin. Do, do promise me this too!’ And she took his hand and pressed it between hers.

The heart of William Pitt Scully, during this speech, was thumping up and down with a frightful velocity and strength. His old love, the agency of the Gorgon property—the dear widow—five thousand a year clear—a thousand delicious hopes rushed madly through his brain, and almost took away his reason. And there she sat—she, the loved one, pressing his hand and looking softly into his eyes.

Down, down he plumped on his knees.

‘Juliana!’ shrieked he, ‘don’t take away your hand! My love—my only love!—speak but those blessed words again! Call me William once more, and do with me what you will.’

Juliana cast down her eyes and said, in the very smallest type—

‘William!’

—when the door opened, and in walked Mr. Crampton, leading Mrs. Biggs, who could hardly contain herself for laughing, and Mr. John Perkins, who was squeezing the arm of Miss Lucy. They had heard every word of the two last speeches.

For at the very moment when Lady Gorgon had stopped at Mr. Scully’s door, the four above-named individuals had issued from Great James Street into Bedford Row. Lucy cried out that it was her aunt’s carriage, and they all saw Mr. Scully come out, bare-headed, in the sunshine, and my lady descend, and the pair go into the house. They meanwhile entered by Mr. Perkins’s own private door, and had been occupied in examining the delightful rooms on the ground floor, which were to be his dining-room and library, from which they ascended a stair to visit the other two rooms, which were to form Mrs. John Perkins’s drawing-room and bedroom. Now whether it was that they trod softly, or that the stairs were covered with a grand new carpet and drugget, as was the case, or that the party within were too much occupied in themselves to heed any outward disturbances, I know not; but Lucy, who was advancing with John (he was saying something about one of the apartments, the rogue!)—Lucy suddenly started, and whispered, ‘There is somebody in the rooms!’ and at that instant began the speech already reported, ‘*Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Scully,*’ etc. etc., which was delivered by Lady Gorgon in a full, clear voice; for, to do her ladyship justice, *she* had not one single grain of love for Mr. Scully, and, during the delivery of her little oration, was as cool as the coolest cucumber.



Then began the impassioned rejoinder to which the four listened on the landing-place; and then the little '*William*,' as narrated above; at which juncture Mr. Crampton thought proper to rattle at the door, and, after a brief pause, to enter with his party.

'William' had had time to bounce off his knees, and was on a chair at the other end of the room.

'What, Lady Gorgon!' said Mr. Crampton, with excellent surprise, 'how delighted I am to see you! Always, I see, employed in works of charity' (the chapel-of-ease paper was on her knees), 'and on such an occasion, too,—it is really the most wonderful coincidence! My dear madam, here is a silly fellow, a nephew of mine, who is going to marry a silly girl, a niece of your own.'

'Sir, I——' began Lady Gorgon, rising.

'They heard every word,' whispered Mr. Crampton eagerly. 'Come forward, Mr. Perkins, and show yourself.' Mr. Perkins made a genteel bow. 'Miss Lucy, please to shake hands with your aunt; and this, my dear madam, is Mrs. Biggs of Mecklenburgh Square, who, if she were not too old, might marry a gentleman in the Treasury, who is your very humble servant'; and with this gallant speech, old Mr. Crampton began helping everybody to sherry and cake.

As for William Pitt Scully, he had disappeared, evaporated, in the most absurd, sneaking way imaginable. Lady Gorgon made good her retreat presently, with much dignity, her countenance undismayed, and her face turned resolutely to the foe.

About five days afterwards, that memorable contest took place in the House of Commons, in which the partisans of Mr. Macabaw were so very nearly getting him the Speakership. On the day that the report of the debate appeared in the *Times*, there appeared also an announcement in the *Gazette* as follows:—

'The King has been pleased to appoint John Perkins, Esq., to be Deputy-Subcomptroller of His Majesty's Tape Office and Custos of the Sealing-Wax Department.'

Mr. Crampton showed this to his nephew with great glee, and was chuckling to think how Mr. William Pitt Scully would be annoyed, who had expected the place, when Perkins burst out laughing and said, 'By heavens! here is my own speech; Scully has spoken every word of it; he has only put in Mr. Pincher's name in the place of Mr. Macabaw's.'

'He is ours now,' responded his uncle, 'and I told you *we would have him for nothing*. I told you, too, that you should be married from Sir George Gorgon's, and here is proof of it.'

It was a letter from Lady Gorgon, in which she said that, 'had she known Mr. Perkins to be a nephew of her friend Mr. Crampton, she never for a moment would have opposed his marriage with her niece, and she had written that morning to her dear Lucy, begging that the marriage breakfast should take place in Baker Street.'

'It shall be in Mecklenburgh Square,' said John Perkins stoutly; and in Mecklenburgh Square it was.

William Pitt Scully, Esq., was, as Mr. Crampton said, hugely annoyed at the loss of the place for his nephew. He had still, however, his hopes to look forward to, but these were unluckily dashed by the coming in of the Whigs. As for Sir George Gorgon, when he came to ask about his peerage, Hawksby told him that they could not afford to lose him in the Commons, for a Liberal Member would infallibly fill his place.

And now that the Tories are out and the Whigs are in, strange to say a Liberal does fill his place. This Liberal is no other than Sir George Gorgon himself, who is still longing to be a lord, and his lady is still devout and intriguing. So that the Members for Oldborough have changed sides, and taunt each other with apostasy, and hate each other cordially. Mr. Crampton still chuckles over the manner in which he tricked them both, and talks of those five minutes during which he stood on the landing-place, and hatched and executed his 'Bedford Row Conspiracy.'

## READING A POEM.

BY MR. MICHAEL ANGELO TITMARSH.

### PART I.

LORD DAUDLEY, the Earl of Bagwig's eldest son, a worshipper of the Muses ; in a dressing-gown, with his shirt-collars turned down.

MR. BOGLE, the celebrated Publisher ; in a publisher's costume of deep black.

MR. BLUDYER, an English gentleman of the press, editor of *The Weekly Bravo* ; green coat, red velvet waistcoat, dirty blue satin cravat, dirty trousers, dirty boots.<sup>1</sup>

MR. DISHWASH, an English gentleman of the press, editor of *The Castalian Magazine* ; very neat, in black, and a diamond pin.

MR. YELLOWPLUSH, my lord's body-servant ; in an elegant livery.

Voices without. The door-bell. NICHOLAS, my lord's tiger.

*The scene is Lord Daudley's drawing-room in the Albany.*

*THE DOOR-BELL (timidly).* Ting, ting.

YELLOWPLUSH (*in an arm-chair before the fire, reading 'The Morning Post'*). 'Yesterday, at St. George's, Hanover Square, by the Lord Bishop of Lawn, the Lord John Fitzwhiskers, to Amelia Frances Annabel, the lovely and accomplished daughter of Samuel Botts, Esq., of Portland Place. After an elegant *déjeuner* at Lord Tufton's mansion, in Cavendish Square, the happy pair set off——'

*The door-bell.* Ring, ting, ting.

YELLOWPLUSH. Where's that hidle Nicholas ? The bell's been going it these ten minutes, and distubbing me at my studies.— 'The happy pair set off for a tour on the continent, and intend, we hear, to pass the carivan—no, the carnival at Naples.' And a pretty junney they'll have of it ! Winter—inondations at Lyons ;

<sup>1</sup> This actor should smell very much of stale smoke, and need not shave for two or three days before performing the part.

four mortal days on board the steam-boat! *I've* been the trip myself, and was half froze on the rumble. Luckily, Mademsell Léocadie, my lady's maid, was with me, and so we kep warm, but——

*The door-bell.* Ring-ar-ling-ring-ling.

YELLOWPLUSH (*in a voice of thunder*). Nicholas, you lazy young raggymuffian! do you hear the bell? Do you want to wake my lord?

NICHOLAS (*without*). This way, sir, *if* you please.

DISHWASH (*entering*). Thank you, Nicholas; I am afraid I disturbed you. Never mind, I've not been there long. Thank you. Just put my galoshes to the fire, will you, like a good lad? for it's bad wet weather.

YELLOWPLUSH. O! it's only one of them lettery chaps; I wonder how my lord can have to do with such. Let us go on with the news.—'On Thursday, Mr. F. Hogawn, of Peckham Rye, to Mary Jane, daughter of John Rudge, Esq., of the same place.' Why can they put such stuff in a genteel newspaper?—Is that you, Mr. Dishwash? Pray, do you come by appointment? My lord ain't up yet, but you may as well set down. There's yesterday's paper somewhere about.

DISHWASH. Thank you, Yellowplush: and how goes it, my fine fellow; any more memoirs, ey? Send me the proofs, my boy, and you shan't want for a good word, you know.

YELLOWPLUSH (*pacified*). Thank you, in return; and here's to-day's *Post*. I've quite done with it; indeed my lord has kep me here this half-hour a-poring over it. I took him his pens, ink, and chocklate at eleven; and I b'lieve he's cumposing something in his warm bath.

DISHWASH. Up late, I suppose? There were three great parties, I know, last night.

YELLOWPLUSH (*aside*). How the juice should *he* know?

DISHWASH. Where was he, now? Come, tell me. Was it at Lord Doldrum's, or at the Duke's? Lady Smigsmag had a small *conversazione*, and very select, too, where I had the honour to pass the evening, and all the world was on the look-out for the famous Lord Daudley, who had promised to come and read us some of his poems.

YELLOWPLUSH. His poems!—his gammin. Since Lord Byrom's time, cuss me if the whole aristoxty has not gone poetry-mad, and writes away like so many common press men. What the juice *do* they write for?—they can't do it half so well as the reglar hacks at the business.

DISHWASH. O, you flatter us, Yellowplush, that you do.

YELLOWPLUSH. I say they *can't* do it as well; and why do they go on? *They* don't want money, as you and I do, Mr. Whatsyourname—Mr. Dishwash. I suppose you only write for money, do you? If you were a gentleman, now—confess, would you ever put pen to paper? I wouldn't, I know;—but there's my lord's bell, and so you can just look over the junnal till I return. † We made a pretty good speech in the House of Commins, last night, as you will see. [Exit.

DISHWASH. Vulgar, low-bred upstart! That creature now has all the vices of the aristocracy, without their virtues. He has no idea of the merit, the dignity of a man of letters, and talks of our divine calling as a trade, and dares to treat me, a poet and a man of letters, on a footing of equality. Ah, for the time when men of our profession shall take their rank with the foremost in the land, and the great republic of genius shall be established. I feel it in my heart—the world demands a republic;—genius will never prosper without it! All men are equal,—and we, above all, ought to be the equals of the highest; and here am I spoken to, familiarly, by a lacquey! I, who am——

BLUDYER (*who has entered with his hat on during DISHWASH'S speech, and slaps the latter on the shoulder*). You are very little better. Confess, now, old buck, wasn't your father a washer-woman, and your mother a linen-draper's clerk?

DISHWASH. No! It's a calumny, Bludyer,—a base falsehood.

BLUDYER. Well, then, what are they?

DISHWASH (*sulkily*). What's that to you?

BLUDYER. There, now, you great noodle, you. You calumniate your own parents more than any one else does, by being ashamed of their calling, whatever it may be. Be a man, now, and don't affect this extra gentility, which all the world laughs at. Be a man, and act like me! Do you suppose *I* care who knows my birth and parentage? No, hang it; anybody may have the history of Jack Bludyer. *He* doesn't go sneaking and cringing to tea-parties;—*he's* no milksop. Jack Bludyer, I tell you, can drink seven bottles of claret at a sitting, and twice as many glasses of whiskey-and-water. I've no pride, and no humility, neither—I don't care to own it. I back myself, look you, Dishwash, and don't give the wall to the first man in Europe.

DISHWASH. I wonder what brings you here, then, my good fellow?

BLUDYER. The same thing that brings you—interest, my fine fellow, and worthy Dishwash: not friendship. I don't care a straw for any man alive; no more do you, although you are so



sentimental. I think you a fool about many matters—don't think you such a fool as to admire Daudley's poems.

DISHWASH (*looking round timidly*). He, he, he! Why, between ourselves, they are not first-rate; and *entre nous*, I know who wrote the best part of them. There's not a single passage in *The Death-knell*; or, *The Lay to Laura*, that's worth reading; but, between ourselves, I wrote it. Don't peach, now;—don't betray me.

BLUDYER. Betray you? 'There's not a single passage in *The Death-knell*; or, *The Lay to Laura*, that's worth twopence;—but *I* wrote it.' You—you've as much strength as milk-and-water, and as much originality as a looking-glass. You write poetry, indeed! You don't drink a bottle of wine in a year. Hang me if I believe you were ever drunk in your life!

DISHWASH. I don't profess to believe, my good sir, that drunkenness is an essential poetic qualification, or that Helicon is gin-and-water—he, he! and if you ever read my little book of 'Violets,' you might have found that out.

BLUDYER. Violets be hanged! I say juniper berries. Give me a good, vigorous style, and none of your namby-pamby milk-and-water. Do you ever read my paper? If you want to see what power is, look at that.

DISHWASH. Indeed. The fact is, I never *do* read it.

BLUDYER. Well, you're right, you're right. I never read anything but what I am forced to read, especially if it's written by my friends. I like to think well of them, Dishwash, and always considered you a clever fellow, till I read that absurd ode of yours about a heliotrope.

DISHWASH. It's quite as good as your ballad in last Sunday's *Bravo*; and my poor article in *The Castalian* is, I am sure, as strong as yours.

BLUDYER. Oh, you *have* read *The Bravo*, have you? What a fool I am, Dishwash,—a great, raw, silly fool. Upon my word and honour, I believed what you said; but it will be a lesson to me, and I won't, my boy, do so again.

DISHWASH. Insufferable coarseness! How goes *The Bravo*, Bludyer?

BLUDYER. We're at 3,500. I don't ask you to credit my word, but look at the stamps.

DISHWASH. Your advertisements pretty good?

BLUDYER. For six months they made a conspiracy against us in the Row; but we beat 'em. You of *The Castalian*, I know, go on the puffing plan: we are a new paper, and take the tomahawking line. I tell you, sir, we've beat the booksellers,

and they are all flocking to us. Last week I attacked a new book of Fogle's so severely—a very good book, too, it was—very well and carefully done, by a scholar and clever man. Well, sir, I belaboured the book so, that Fogle came down to our place with tears in his eyes, and a whole bundle of advertisements, and cried '*Peccavi*.' The abuse of that book will be worth £300 a year to *The Bravo*. But what is gratitude? If I, who have done our proprietors that service, get a five-pound-note for my share, it is all I can look for. What rascals publishers are, hey, Dishwash? Are we to be kept here for ever? How long have you been waiting?

DISHWASH. Why, a quarter of an hour, or may be longer.

BLUDYER. That's the way with you all. You cringe to these aristocrats. Curse them; take them by the horns, and be a man. You have waited an hour: see, now, how Daudley will admit *me*. (Mr. BLUDYER *kicks against the panels of LORD DAUDLEY'S bedroom, and shouts*)—Hallo! Daudley—Lord Daudley, don't keep me here all day! I've got some proofs of *The Bravo* to read to you, and can't wait.

YELLOWPLUSH (*putting his nose out*). You can't come in, my lord's in his bath.

BLUDYER (*through the door*). Well, I'm off, then; and by Jupiter, my lord, look to yourself.

YELLOWPLUSH. My lord says that, if you don't mind seeing him in his dishybeel, you may come in to him, Mr. Bludyer.

BLUDYER (*to DISHWASH*). There, spooney! didn't I tell you so?

DISHWASH. Use a little more gentlemanly language, Mr. Bludyer, if you please.

BLUDYER. Gentlemanly language? Hang it, sir, do you mean I'm no gentleman? Say so again, and I'll pull your nose.

YELLOWPLUSH. My lord's waiting, Mr. Bludyer.

(*They go in.*)

DISHWASH. I wonder whether he *would* pull my nose, now—the great coarse, vulgar, gin-drinking monster! It is those men who are a disgrace to our profession; and, with all his affectation of independence and bluntness, I know that man to be as servile a sycophant as crawls. Oh, for a little honesty in this world; and oh that the man of letters would understand the dignity of his pro——

NICHOLAS (*without*). Mr. Bogle!

*Enter MR. BOGLE.*

BOGLE. My appointment's at eleven, and tell his lordship I must see his lordship soon, if he can make it convenient. I've

fourteen other calls to make on the tip-top people of the town. Ha! Dish., how are you? I've fourteen other calls—fourteen volumes of poems, by fourteen dukes, duchesses, and so on, down to baronets; but they're common now, Dish., quite common. Why, sir, a few years ago I could sell an edition with a baronet's name to it; and now the public won't have anything under an earl. Fact, upon honour!—And how goes on *The Castilian*, hey, Dishwash?

DISHWASH. *Castalian*, Mr. Bogle—he, he! You sell books, but you don't *read* them, I fancy?

BOGLE. No more I do, my boy—no such fool; I keep a man to read them, one of your fellows.

DISHWASH (*sneeringly*). O yes—Diddle; I know your man well enough.

BOGLE. Well, sir! I pay Mr. Diddle three hundred a year, and you don't fancy I would be such a flat as to read my books when I have a man of his experience in my establishment. Have you anything to say against Mr. Diddle, sir?

DISHWASH. Not a syllable; he is not exactly a *genius*—he, he!—but I believe he is a very estimable man.

BOGLE. Well, I tell you, then, that he has a great deal to say against *you*. Your magazine is not strong enough in its language, sir. Our books have not their fair chance, sir. You gave Fogle's house three columns last week, and us only two. I'll withdraw my advertisements if this kind of game continues, and carry them over to *The Aperian*.

DISHWASH. *The Aperian*! why, our sale is double theirs.

BOGLE. I don't care! I'll have my books properly reviewed; or else, I'll withdraw my ads. Four hundred a year, Mr. Dishwash; take 'em or leave 'em, as you like, sir. But my house is not going to be sacrificed for Fogle's. No, no.

DISHWASH. My dear good sir, what in conscience can you want now? I said that Lady Laura Lippet's *Gleanings of Fantasy* were gorgeous lucubrations of divine intellect, and that the young poetess had decked her brow with that immortal wreath which Sappho bore of yore. I said that no novelist since the days of Walter Scott had ever produced so divine a composition as Countess Swanquil's *Amarantha*. I said that Lord Cut-thrust's account of the military operations at Wormwood Scrubs was written with the iron pen of a Tacitus.

BOGLE. I believe you, it *was* written well. Diddle himself wrote the whole book.

DISHWASH. And because Fogle's house published a remarkable work, really now a remarkable history, that must have taken the author ten years of labour——

BOGLE. Don't remarkable history me, sir. You praise *all* Fogle's books. Hearn ye, Dishwash, you praise so much and so profusely, that no one cares a straw for your opinions. You must abuse, sir; look at Bludyer, now—*The Bravo's* the paper for my money. See what *he* says about that famous history that you talk of—(*takes out a paper and reads*). 'Senseless trash; stupid donkey; absurd ignoramus; disgusting twaddle!' and disposes of the whole in a few lines—that's the way to crush a book, sir.

DISHWASH. Well, well, I will abuse some poor devil, to please you. But you know if I am severe on one house, I must be so on another. I can't praise all your books and abuse all Fogle's.

BOGLE. Of course not, of course not; fair's the word, and I'll give you a list now of some of my books which you may attack to your heart's content. Here—here's a history, two poems, a volume of travels, and an Essay on Population.

DISHWASH. He, he, he! I suppose you publish these books *on the author's account*, hey?

BOGLE. Get along, you sly dog. What! you know *that*, do you? You don't suppose I am such a fool as to cry out against my own property. No, no, leave Tom Bogle alone.

DISHWASH. Well, I suppose you are here about Lord Daudley's new volume.

BOGLE. *Passion-Flowers!* there's a title! there's no man in England can invent a title like my friend Diddle. '*Passion-Flowers*, by the Lord Daudley, with twenty illustrations on steel;' let my lord put his name to it, and I'd make my fortune, sir. It's nothing; he can get anybody to do the book; you could knock it off yourself, Mr. Dishwash, in a month, for I've heard Diddle say that you've a real talent that way.

DISHWASH. Did he now, really? that Diddle's a clever fellow.

BOGLE (*musings*). Twenty plates—red velvet binding—four thousand. Yes, I could give my lord eight hundred pounds for that book. I'll give it him for his name; I don't want him to write a word of it.

DISHWASH. No, no, of course; you and I know that it must be done by one of *us*. Well, now, suppose, under the rose, that I undertake the work?

BOGLE. Well, I have no objection; I told you what Diddle said.

DISHWASH. And about the terms, ay, Bogle?

BOGLE. Why, though there are half-a-dozen men about my place who could turn out the work famously, yet I should like to employ you, as Diddle says you are a clever man. My terms

shall be liberal. Yes—let me see, I'll give you, for seventy short poems, mere trifles, you know——

DISHWASH. A short poem often requires a deal of labour, Mr. Bogle. Look at my *Violets*; now, there's a sonnet in that book dedicated to Lady Titterton, whom Sultan Mahmoud fell in love with, which took me six weeks' time. You *must* remember it; it runs so:—

As 'tis his usage in the summer daily,  
Impelled by fifty Moslemish oars,  
With crescent banners floating at the mast,  
And loyal cannon shouting from the shores,  
The great Commander of the Faithful past  
Towards his pleasure-house at Soujout Kalé.  
Why turns the imperial cheek so ashy paly? \* \*

BOGLE. O, never mind your verses. You literary men are always talking of your shop; nothing is so vulgar, my good fellow, and so listen to me. Will you write the *Passion-Flowers*, or will you not? If you choose to do me seventy-two sets of verses (the time is *your* look-out, you know, not mine), I'll give six-and-thirty guineas.

DISHWASH. Six-and-thirty guineas!

BOGLE. In bills at one, two, and three years. There are my terms,—take 'em or leave 'em.

YELLOWPLUSH (*entering*). Gentlemen, MY LORD!

LORD DAUDLEY and BLUDYER *enter*.

DAUDLEY. Charles, get some soda-water for Mr. Bludyer.

BLUDYER. And some sherry, Charles. I was as drunk as a lord last night.

DAUDLEY. Bludyer, you compliment the aristocracy.

DISHWASH. Ha, ha, ha! Very good, isn't it, Bogle?

BOGLE. Is it? O yes! ha, ha, ha! capital!

BLUDYER. Not so bad, Daudley: for a lord you are really a clever fellow. I don't say it to flatter you—no, hang me! I flatter nobody, and hate the aristocracy; but you are a clever fellow.

DISHWASH. It is a comfort to have Mr. Bludyer's word for it, at any rate; he, he!

BLUDYER. Well, sir, are you going to doubt Mr. Bludyer's word? Give me leave to tell you, that your remark is confoundingly impertinent!

YELLOWPLUSH (*going out*). Oh, these lettery people? What infurnal corseness and wulgarity!

DAUDLEY. Come, come—no quarrelling. You fellows of the



what's-his-name, you know—what we used to say at Oxon, you know, of the *genus irritabile*, hay? Bludy, you must be a little more placable; and, Washy, your language was a little too strong. Hay, Bogle, you understand? I call these two fellows Bludy and Washy; and as for Dishwash, if I don't call him Washy, I'll call him Dishy, hay?

BOGLE. Capital! capital! You'll kill me with laughing;—and I want to talk to your lordship about the *Passion-Flower* business.

DAUDLEY. Your rival bookseller, Mr. Fogle, has been with me already about the book.

BOGLE. What! with my title? The scoundrel! My lord, it's a felony. You are not going to lend yourself to such a transaction, I am sure. Fogle publish the *Passion-Flowers*! I'll prosecute the unprincipled ruffian; I will, as sure as my name's Bo——

DAUDLEY. To a goose. Fogle is not going to publish a book called *Passion-Flowers*; but he has a project of a little work, bound in blue velvet, containing twenty-two illustrations on steel, written by the Lord D'Audley, and called *The Primavera*.

BOGLE. The what? It's a forgery all the same. I'll prosecute him—by all the gods, I will!

DAUDLEY. Well, well, we have come to no bargains. *Entre nous*, you publishers are deuced stingy fellows.

DISHWASH. He, he, he!

BLUDYER. Haw, haw, haw! Had you there, old Bogle!

DAUDLEY. And that rascal only offers me six hundred pounds.

BOGLE. I'll give six-and-fifty.

DAUDLEY. No go.

BOGLE. Seven hundred, then?

DAUDLEY. Won't do.

BOGLE. Well, make it eight hundred, and ruin me at once.

DAUDLEY. Mr. Bogle, my worthy man, my terms are a thousand pounds. A thousand pounds, look you, or curse me if you get a single *Passion-Flower* out of George Daudley.

YELLOWPLUSH (*entering*). Mr. Fogle, my lord, the publisher.

BOGLE. What?

YELLOWPLUSH. Mr. Fogle, my lord, according to appointment, he says. Shall I show him in?

DAUDLEY. Yes, you may as well. Yes, certainly.—(*Aside*.)—Egad, he's come just at the proper moment!

BOGLE. Stop, my lord; pray, stop one minute. That ruffian follows me like my shadow. Show him into the study. For heaven's sake, let me say a word.

DAUDLEY. Show Mr. Fogle into the study, Charles. (*Exit YELLOWPLUSH.*) Well, now, my worthy man, what have you to say?

BOGLE. Well, then, my lord, just to keep your name upon my lists, I'll make the money nine hundred.

DAUDLEY. Sir, give me leave to tell you that your offer is impertinent.—Charles!

BOGLE (*drawing out a paper*). Very good, then; here's the agreement. Sign this: a thousand pounds; the MSS. to be delivered in three months; half the money on delivery: the rest in bills, at three and six months. Will that suit you?—No? Say two hundred pounds down. Here's the money.

DAUDLEY. Egad, this will do! Here, I'll sign it, and let our two friends here be witnesses.

BOGLE. But, my lord, a word with you—about—about the writing of the poems. Will you do them, or shall we? There is a capital hand in our house, who could knock them off in a month.

DAUDLEY. Upon my word, this surpasses everything I ever knew. Do you suppose I am an impostor, Mr. Bogle? Take your money, and your infernal agreement, and your impertinent self, out of the room.

BOGLE. A million pardons, my dear, dear, dear, *dear* lord; I wouldn't offend your lordship for the world. Come, come, let us sign. You will sign? Here, where the wafer is. I've made my clerk copy out the agreement; one copy for me and one for your lordship. There, there's my name—'Henry Bogle.' And here are the notes, of which your lordship will just acknowledge the receipt. Please, gents, to witness this here understanding between his lordship and me.

DISHWASH (*signs*). 'Percy Dishwash.' } Of course you give us  
BLUDYER. 'John Bludyer.' } a dinner, Bogle?

BOGLE. Oh, certainly, some day. Bless my soul! twelve o'clock, and I have an appointment with Lady Mantrap at half-past eleven! Good-bye, my lord, my *dear* lord.—Good-bye, Dish.—Bludyer, you owe me ten pounds, remember, and our magazine wants your article very much. Good-bye, good-bye, good-b—  
(*Here the door shuts upon MR. BOGLE.*)

DISHWASH. Well, the bargain is not a bad one. Do you know, my lord, that Bogle had the conscience to offer me six-and-thirty guineas for the book which will bring you a thousand?

DAUDLEY. Very possibly, my good fellow; but the name's everything. I have not the vanity to suppose that I can write much better than you, or Bludyer, here.

DISHWASH. Oh, my lord ! my lord !

DAUDLEY. No, indeed ; really, now, I don't think so. But if the public chooses to buy Lord Daudley's verses, and not to care——

DISHWASH. For poor, humble Percy Dishwash, heigho ! you were in the right to make the best bargain you can, as I should be the last to deny.

(MR. YELLOWPLUSH *here enters with* MR. BLUDYER'S *soda-water.*)

*Soda-water*—P-f-f-f-f-f—op whizz. (MR. BLUDYER *drinks.*)

DISHWASH. But where is Fogle all this while ? you should have had him in and pitted him against his rival.

DAUDLEY (*archly*). Ask Charles.—Charles, you rogue, why do you keep Mr. Fogle waiting ?

YELLOWPLUSH. Mr. Fogle's *non inventus*, my lord.—He never was there at all, gentlemen ; it was only a *de ruse* of mine, which I hope your lordship will igscuse, but happening to be at the door——

BLUDYER. And happening to be listening !

YELLOWPLUSH. Well, sir ! I confess I *was* listening—in my lord's interest, in course ; and I am sure my stepping in at that moment caused Mr. Bogle to sign the agreement. My lord won't forget it, I trust, and cumsider that, without that sackimstans, he mightn't have made near such a good bargaining.—

[*Exit* YELLOWPLUSH.]

DAUDLEY. No, I won't forget it, you may be sure, Master Charles. And, egad ! as soon as I have paid the fellow his wages, I'll send him off. He's a great deal too clever for me ; the rogue writes, gentlemen, would you believe it ? and has just had the impudence to republish his works.

DISHWASH. Never mind him, my dear lord ; but do now let us hear some of yours. What were you meditating this morning ? Confess now—some delightful poem, I am sure.

## PART II.

DAUDLEY. Well, then, if you must know the truth, I was scribbling a little something ; just a trifling thought that came into my brain this morning, as I was looking out at the mignonette-pot in my bedroom window. You know it was Lady Blanche Bluenose that gave it me, and I promised her a little copy of verses in return. 'Well,' says I, thinking over my bargain with

that fellow Bogle, 'as I have agreed to write something about flowers, my little poem for Lady Blanche's album will answer for my volume too, and so I shall kill two birds with one stone.' That's the very thing I said ; not bad, was it ?

BLUDYER. Not bad ? devilish good, by the immortal Jove. Hang me, my lord, but you're a regular Joe Miller.

DISHWASH. Really now, Lord Daudley, you should write a comic novel. Something in the Dickens style.

DAUDLEY. I shouldn't wonder if I did ; I've thought of it, Dishwash, often. The *New Novel of Low Life*, by Lord Daudley, hay ? forty illustrations by Whiz ; it wouldn't sound badly. But, to return to the *Passion-Flowers*.

DISHWASH. We are all ear.

BLUDYER. Not all ear, Dish. ; a good deal of you is nose.

DAUDLEY. Mr. Bludyer, for Heaven's sake, a truce to these personalities, if you have a mind to listen to me. I told you I was thinking in bed this morning about Lady Blanche's present, and the poem I had promised her. 'Egad !' says I, starting up in bed, and flinging my green velvet night-cap very nearly out of window, 'why should I not write about that flower-pot ?'

BLUDYER. And a dev'lish good idea, too.

DISHWASH. (*Aside.* Toad-eater.) O ! leave Lord Daudley alone for ideas.

DAUDLEY. Well, sir, I instantly rung my body-fellow, Charles, had my bath, ordered my chocolate, and, with the water exactly at ninety-two, began my poem.

BLUDYER. O ! you practise the hot-water stimulus, do you, my lord ? And so do I ; but I always have mine at Fahrenheit ; boiling, my lord, as near as possible.

DAUDLEY. Gad now ! you don't say so ?

BLUDYER. Boiling, yes, with a glass of brandy in it—do you take ? Once, when I wrote for the Whigs—you know I am Radical now—I wrote eight-and-thirty stanzas at a sitting. And how do you think I did it ? By nineteen glasses of brandy-and-water. That's your true Castalian, ay, Dishwash ? But, I beg pardon for interrupting you in your account of your brilliant idea ; tell us more about the 'Flower-pot,' my lord.

DISHWASH. The verses, the verses, my lord, by all means—positively now I'm dying to know them.

DAUDLEY. O, ah ! the verses—yes—that is—why, egad, I've not written down any yet, but I have them here in my brain—all the ideas at least, and that's the chief thing.

BLUDYER. Why, I don't know ; I don't think it's of any use to have ideas, or too many of them, in a set of verses.

DAUDLEY. You are satirical, you rogue Bludyer, you—dev'lish satirical, by Jove. But the fact is, I can't help having ideas, and a deuced many of them, too. My first idea was to say, that that humble flower-pot of mignonette was more precious to me than, egad! all the flowers in a conservatory.

BLUDYER. Very good and ingenious.

DISHWASH. Very pretty and pastoral; and how, my lord, did you begin?

DAUDLEY. Why, I began—quite modestly you know,—

My little humble flower-pot—

and there, egad! I stuck fast—for my bell began a cursed ringing, and presently this monster of a Bludyer came and kicked down my dressing-room door almost, and drove poetry out of my head. So as you served me so, why, gentlemen, you must help me in my ode. I want to say how it looks out into Piccadilly, you know, and on St. James's Church, and all that.

BLUDYER. Excuse me, that will never do; say it looks out on your park in Yorkshire. Mrs. Grange the pastry-cook's window looks into Piccadilly just as well as your lordship's. You must have something more aristocratic.

DAUDLEY. Egad! yes, not bad. Well, it *shall* look into my park at Daudley. I thought so myself; do you like the idea, ay, gentlemen? You do like it, I thought you would. Well, then, my flower-pot stands in a window, and the window is in a tower, and the tower is in Daudley park, and I begin,—

*My little humble flower-pot,*

*My little hum——*

DISHWASH. *Upon my turret flaunting free*,—flaunting free! there's an expression!—there's a kind of *laissez aller* about it.

BLUDYER.

My little humble flower-pot,

Upon my turret flaunting free,

Thou art more loved by me, I wot,

Than all the sweets of Araby.

DAUDLEY.—Stop, stop!—by Gad, the very thing I was going to say; I thought of 'I wot' and 'Araby,' at once, only Bludyer interrupted me. It wasn't a bad notion, was it? (*Reads*) Hum, hum—'flower-pot—flaunting *free*—by me, I *wot*—Araby.' Well, I've done for *that* idea, at any rate,—now let's see for another.

BLUDYER. Done with that, already? Good Heavens, Daudley,



you had need be a lord, and a rich one, to fling about your wealth in that careless kind of way,—a commoner can't afford to be so prodigal; and, if you will take my advice in the making of poems—whenever you get an idea, make a point of repeating it two or three times, thus:—

Not all the sweets of Eastern bower——

DAUDLEY. Egad, the very words out of my own mouth—  
(*writes*) 'Eastern bower'——

BLUDYER.

Are half so dearly prized by me,  
As is the little gentle flower——

DAUDLEY.

Pot, in my turret flaunting free.

That's the thing.

DISHWASH. Why, no, my dear lord, if I might advise, it's well to repeat the same sentiment twice or three times over, as Mr. Bludyer says. In one of Sir Edward's tragedies, I counted the same simile fourteen times, but at intervals of two or three pages or so. Suppose, now, instead of your admirable line——

BLUDYER. Which divides the pot from the flower, you see.

DISHWASH. We say——

As is the little gentle flower,  
The mignonette, that blooms in thee!

DAUDLEY. Bravo!—eight lines already. Egad, gentlemen, I'm in the vein.

BLUDYER. There's nothing like backing your luck in these cases, my lord, and so let us throw in another stanza,—

My little dewy moss-grown vase,  
Forth from its turret looks and sees,  
Wide stretched around the park and chase,  
The dappled deer beneath the trees.

Ha! what do you say to that? There's nothing like the use of venison in a poem—it has a liberal air; now let's give them a little mutton. I presume you feed sheep in your park, Lord Daudley, as well as deer?

DAUDLEY. O yes, 'gad! and cows too—hundreds of them.

BLUDYER.

Beside the river bask the kine,  
The sheep go browsing o'er the sward;  
And kine, and sheep, and deer are mine,  
And all the park calls Daudley lord.

DAUDLEY. It *doesn't*, my dear fellow—egad, I wish it did—but till my father's death, you know——

DISHWASH. Bagwig is a sad unromantic name for a poem.

DAUDLEY. Well, well—I'll yield to my friends, and sacrifice my own convictions. I'll say Daudley, then, and not Bagwig. And, Dishwash, you may say everywhere, that in my poem of *The Flower-pot*, you suggested that alteration. (*Writes*)—‘And all the park calls Daudley lord!’

BLUDYER.

Safe sheltered in thy turret nook,  
My gentle flower-pot, 'tis thine  
Upon this peaceful scene to look,  
The lordship of my ancient line!  
Rich are my lands, and wide they range——

DAUDLEY (*who writes always as BLUDYER dictates*). ‘Rich are my lands, and wide they range.’—Egad! they're devilishly mortgaged though, Master Bludyer; but I won't say anything about *that*.

DISHWASH. Bravo! Capital!

BLUDYER.

Rich are my lands, and wide they range,  
And yet do I esteem them not,  
And lightly would my lordships change  
Against my little flower-pot.

DISHWASH. Whew!

DAUDLEY. Come, come Bludyer, that's *too* much.

BLUDYER. Not a whit, as you shall see——

By wide estates I set no store,  
No store on sparkling coronet;  
The *poet's heart* can value more  
This fragrant plant of mignonette.  
And as he fondly thinks of her  
Who once the little treasure owned,  
The lover may the gift prefer  
To mines of gold and diamond.

Isn't that, now, perfectly satisfactory? You are a lover, and your mistress's gift is more precious to you than Potosi; a poet (and that you know you are), and a little flower provokes in you——

DISHWASH. Hopes, feelings, passionate aspirations, thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears. Holy memories of bygone times, pure as the innocent dew that twinkles on the cup of the flower; fragrant, mysterious, stealing on the senses as—as——

DAUDLEY. Exactly so. You are perfectly right, egad ; though I never thought that I had those feelings before.

DISHWASH. O, it's astonishing how the merest trifle serves to awaken the vastest thoughts : and, in such a way, my hint might aid your lordship. Suppose we continue :—

My mild and winsome flower-pot !

BLUDYER (*aside*). Mild and winsome ! there's affectation ! but let the epithets pass, they're good enough for a lord.

DISHWASH (*continuing*).

My mild and winsome flower-pot,  
As—let me see—as on thy dewy buds I gaze,  
I think how different is my lot  
Unto my sire's in ancient days.  
Where softly droops my bonny flower,  
My free and feathery mignonette,  
Upon its lofty, ancient tower  
The banner of my race was set.

DAUDLEY. 'Race was set.' Bravo ! we're getting on,—hay, Bludyer ? But you are no hand at an impromptu, like Dishwash and myself ; he's quite beaten, I declare, and has not another rhyme for the dear life.

BLUDYER. Not another rhyme ! my dear lord, a dozen ; as thus :—

Where peaceful roam the kine and sheep,  
Were men-at-arms with bow and bill ;  
Where blooms my flower upon the keep,  
A warder blew his clarion shrill.

And now for the moral :—

Dark memories of blood and crime  
Away ! the poet loves you not ;  
Ah me ! the chieftains of that time,  
Had never seen a flower-pot !<sup>1</sup>

DAUDLEY. Bravo, bravissimo ! six stanzas, by the immortal gods ! Upon my word, you were right, Bludyer, and I was in the vein. Why, this will fill a couple of pages, and we may get the *Passion-Flowers* out in a month. Come and see me often, my lads, hay ? and, egad ! yes, I'll read you some more poems.

<sup>1</sup> A poem very much of this sort, from which the writer confesses he has borrowed the idea and all the principal epithets, such as 'free and feathery,' 'mild and winsome,' etc., is to be found in *The Keepsake*, nor is it by any means the worst ditty in the collection.

DISHWASH. Two o'clock, Heaven bless me ! my lord, I really must be off to my office, for I have several columns of the *Castalian* to get ready before night. As I shall be very much pressed for time and copy, might I ask, as the greatest favour in the world, permission to insert into the paper a part of that charming little poem which you have just done us the favour to read to us ?

DAUDLEY. Well, I don't mind, my good fellow. You will say, of course, that it is from Lord Daudley's forthcoming volume of *Passion-Flowers* ; and, I am sure, will add something, something good-natured, you know, in your way, about the projected book.

DISHWASH. O, certainly, with the greatest pleasure. Farewell, my dear lord, I must tear myself away, though I could stay and listen to your poetry for hours ; there is nothing more delightful than to sit by a great artist, and watch the progress of his work. Good-bye, good-bye. Don't ring, I shall find the way easily myself, and I hope you will not be on any ceremony with me.

DAUDLEY. Good-bye, Dishwash. And, I say, come in sometimes of a morning, like a worthy fellow as you are, and perhaps I may read to you some more of my compositions. (*Exit DISHWASH, bowing profusely.*)—A good useful creature that, ay, Bludyer ? but no power, no readiness, no *vis*. The fellow scarcely helped us with a line or a rhyme in my poem.

BLUDYER. A good-natured milksop of a creature, and very useful, as you say. He will give you a famous puff in *The Castalian*, be sure.

DAUDLEY. As you will, I am certain, in *The Bravo*.

BLUDYER. Perhaps, perhaps ; but we are, as you are aware, in the satirical vein, and I don't know whether our proprietors will allow me to be complimentary even to my own—I mean, to your works. However, between ourselves, there is a way of mollifying them.

DAUDLEY. As how ?

BLUDYER. By a bribe, to be sure. To be plain with you, my lord, suppose you send through me a five-pound note to be laid out in paragraphs in *The Bravo*. I will take care to write them all myself, and that they shall be well worth the money.

DAUDLEY. Nonsense ! you do not mean that your people at *The Bravo* are so unprincipled as that ?

BLUDYER. Unprincipled ? the word is rather strong, my lord ; but do exactly as you please. Nobody forces you to advertise with us ; only do not, for the future, ask me to assist at the reading of your poems any more, that's all.

DAUDLEY. (*Aside.*—Unconscionable scoundrel !) Come, come,

Bludyer, here's the five-pound note; you are very welcome to take it——

BLUDYER. To my proprietors, of course. You do not fancy it is for *me*?

DAUDLEY. Not in the least degree; pray take it and lay it out for me.

BLUDYER. *Entre nous*, I wish it *were* for me; for, between ourselves, I am sadly pressed for money; and if you could, out of our friend Bogle's heap, lend me five pounds for myself—indeed, now, you would be conferring a very great obligation upon me. I will pay you, you know, upon my honour as a gentleman.

DAUDLEY. Not a word more; here is the money, and pray pay me or not, as it suits you.

BLUDYER. Thank you, Daudley; the turn shall not be lost, depend upon it; and if ever you are in want of a friend in the press, count upon Jack Bludyer, and no mistake. (*Exit BLUDYER, with his hat very much on one side.*)

*Enter YELLOWPLUSH.*

DAUDLEY. Well, Charles, you scoundrel, you are a literary man, and know the difficulty of composition.

CHARLES. I b'leave you, my lord.

DAUDLEY. Well, sir, what do you think of my having written a poem of fifty lines, while those fellows were here all the time chattering and talking to me?

CHARLES. Is it posbil?

DAUDLEY. Possible? Egad, you shall hear it;—just listen. (*Reads*)—

‘THE SONG OF THE FLOWER-POT.’

(*The ‘Flower-pot’ was presented to the writer by the Lady  
Blanche Bluenose.*)

My little gentle flower-pot,  
Upon my turret flaunting free——

[*As his lordship is reading his poem, the curtain drops. The Castalian Magazine of the next week contains a flaming puff upon Lord Daudley's *Passion-Flowers*; but *The Weekly Bravo* has a furious attack upon the work, because Lord Daudley refused to advance a third £5 note to the celebrated Bludyer. After the critique, his lordship advances the £5 note. And at a great public dinner, where my Lord Daudley is called upon to speak to a toast, he discourses upon the well-known sentiment—THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE PRESS! IT IS LIKE THE AIR WE BREATHE: WITHOUT IT WE DIE.*]



## ROLANDSECK.

BY MR. MICHAEL ANGELO TITMARSH.

I WAS making a little tour on the Rhine last year in company with my wife and my three girls, their governess, a few poodles, a parrot, lady's-maid, and the other useful baggage which makes the operation of travelling so delightful for a married man. At the frontier of every little absurd German principality, at the landing-place of each steam-boat, going from the inns, coming from the inns, you have the delight of superintending about forty indescribable female trunks and bandboxes. You, who have come out after a year's labour in London to rid your mind of care ; you, who pay with your hard earnings every shilling of the journey ; you, who have only a little valise of your own that a baby could carry, must bear all this tremendous weight of family upon your back ; and be contented, forsooth, and pretend to take pleasure. There are certain periods in the year when, it is my firm opinion, families ought to be suppressed altogether. Asylums should be erected for them, where they should remain locked up and cared for during the six weeks that the head of the house was away upon his holiday. All decent comforts should be provided for them, but on no account should they be allowed, for the period in question, to quit the gates of the asylum, or to communicate by letter with the absent *pater familia*. In this way a man might have a chance, at least for six weeks in the year, to fling his cares off his shoulders, and to breathe the free air.

We had somehow made an acquaintance at Cologne with a young fellow who insisted in pushing into my hand a glazed card, smelling very much of musk, on which was engraved the name of Mr. George Delamere ; and being asked by my wife whether he was related to the Delameres in our part of the country, who are very great people, the gentleman said he *was* a distant connexion of the family, which made Mrs. X. excessively civil to him. We walked about the town together, my daughter Jemima dangling on his arm. I took Mrs. X., of course, the governess following

with the young ones. We walked about the most inodorous town in Europe; saw the churches, cathedrals, Rubens' house, and what not; and heartily tired I was of it; for I don't care for your pictures and antiquities a jot. One picture that struck me in the place, however, was to be seen in every square and street of it, and that was no other than the likeness of the savage woman with long hair and a looking-glass, which figures over the Macassar-oil bills of the famous Mr. Rowland, of Hatton Garden; these bills stared us in the face wherever we went, and being a commercial man myself, I could not but point out with pride and exultation to my girls and their mother this proof of the great energy of our English tradesmen, who push their manufactures into all quarters of the globe.

Young Delamere and Jemima seemed to be very thick together, and I begged Mrs. X. to be very cautious as to her daughter's behaviour, and as to encouraging the young fellow too much. 'Pooh! pooh! X.,' said my wife, 'you are always thinking of Dixon, the drysalter, as if Jemima was made to marry and die in Broad Street! This young Delamere is a thousand times more *distingué*; and I'll ask Sir John about him the very next time we go into Hampshire.'

He *was* a smart-looking chap, certainly—somewhat too smart, as I thought—but I am a plain man; my wife vowed he was perfection, and so did the girls. He was dressed in the following way: He had a blue cap, with a gold band and tassel, stuck on one side of his head, which was covered with a profusion of glossy brown curls. He had a tuft on his chin, his collars turned down, and fastened at the neck with a loose green satin handkerchief, and large carbuncle pin. He wore a blouse, embroidered with red worsted, and a black leather girdle round his waist; strawberry-cream-coloured trousers, and trab jean boots with glossy leather tips. I remember the dress so well, because my wife, on our arrival at Frankfort, made me get just such another, and turn down my collars, and wear a tuft on my chin. I can tell you that my great, bristly, shining double-jowl looked rather queer thus displayed, and that *my* girdle was some ten inches more round the waist than Delamere's. How the chaps on 'Change would have laughed to see Bob X. in such a costume!

Well, sir, on our passage up the Rhine, Delamere was always talking poetry and that kind of stuff to the girls, knew the country well, could ask for what he wanted in the regular German twang, and was as useful to us as possible. One day Jemima came to me with a very important air, and said, 'Do you know, papa, he has published?'

‘What! Dixon, my dear?’ says I; ‘every fool knows that. Dick Dixon’s pamphlet on the tallow-trade was as good a thing as ever I read.’

‘Psha! papa, I don’t mean Mr. Dixon and his odious tallow; I mean Mr. Delamere. He says he has published a great deal of poetry, and I’m going—I’m going to show him some of mine—that Rebus you know that gained me the prize:—

‘I am first in the last, in the lost I am found;  
In the flower you’ll see me, though not in the ground;  
In the lily and lilac and lotus I’m hid;  
Though not seen in the eye, yet I’m known to its lid;  
In the castle I lurk, in the palace am seen,  
Though banished, alas! from the cot on the green;  
Deep hid in the violet’s bosom I dip;  
Indeed, I’m the very first thing on your lip.’

‘It must be whiskers,’ says I, as quick as thought.

‘Psha!’ cried Jemima to Mr. Delamere, who strolled up, ‘you who have published I’m sure will be able to guess my little effusion. Though, why do I ask? perhaps you saw it in the *Pocket-Book* last year?’

‘Pray go on, dear miss,’ said he.

Jemima continued—

‘Indeed, I’m the very first thing on your lip;  
Though not known to the river, I’m found in its flow;  
Unseen in the breezes, I’m still in their blow;  
Not felt in the fire, yet I’m part of the coal,  
And am aye the last thing that is found in the bowl.’

‘That’s lemon peel,’ said I; but I was wrong again. Jemima went on:—

‘When you turn to the right, though of me you’re bereft,  
I’m the very first thing that you meet on your left;  
I always am heard in the toll of the bell,  
And am lying like truth at the end of a well.  
Is a lady without me? don’t deign to accost her,  
You find her a sad begging-letter impostor.  
You will certainly own that I’m present at lunch,  
Though absent when dinner and breakfast you munch;  
And yet I am never away from your meals,  
You have me alike in soles, salmons, and eels;  
In mutton, beef, chickens, although I am missed,  
Yet in veal, and in lamb, and in fowls I exist;  
I lie in your pillow, though not on your bed.  
Say, gentles, my name, for my riddle is read.’

It was the letter L, as Delamere guessed like lightning ; and the passage about the lady turning into the begging-letter impostor was a sly cut that Miss Jemima made at me ; for the fact is, I had paid a couple of guineas to the person in question, and my wife never ceased laughing at me about it, though I declare I did it at her express suggestion. I only introduce this little charade to show what a superior girl my Jemima is, full of poetry and imagination.

These imaginative young ladies are always on the look-out, however, for what they call kindred spirits, and I saw very soon that the dashing, poetic Mr. Delamere was cutting poor Dick Dixon out.

He had a whole host of stories and poetry, to be sure, and knew all the legends of all the places which we visited. Off Drachenfelt he spouted to us Lord Byron's lines ; and on the day that we paid a visit to Rolandseck, where we had a picnic party, he told us the following remarkable tale, not to be found in any of the guide-books, and which, perhaps, you do not know :—

#### ‘THE GIFT OF THE FAIRIES.

‘The town of Rolandseck was so called from a noble family of that name which inhabited the place, and which is not yet extinct. As for the story which has been put into verse by the poet Schiller, that, madam, has not the slightest authenticity, and, you may depend upon it, is all a flam.’

‘A what, sir?’ said my wife.

‘Never mind, mamma, and do let Mr. Delamere continue,’ cried Jemima.

The young gentleman resumed, in an inspired voice. ‘Look at the silver Rhine, madam, flowing before us so silent and majestic ; since the steam-boats have passed up and down that river, with their great snorting chimneys and furious frothing paddles, they have not only driven the fish out of the river, but, what was infinitely more precious, the fairies.’

‘Good heavens ! do you believe in them !’ cries Jemima, quite delighted.

‘Miss,’ said Mr. Delamere, ‘there are several more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. Fairies are among these, and I have proofs of their existence ; proofs in my portmanteau at home, for the matter of that,—but not since the introduction of steam-boats. No, no ; they could not bear your cursed unromantic engines and boilers, and have fled the river for ever.

‘In the time of the first Lord of Rolandseck, however, the case

was very different, and fairies, madam, were as common in these parts—as common as policemen in the Strand. It's a fact, as you shall allow, ere long.

'The Lord of Rolandseck, after being married for twenty years to an amiable baroness, was at length blessed with a child. The fairies of his acquaintance had long foretold the birth of it; and, when he had asked whether the child about to be born should be a young baron, the oracle he consulted replied that it should have the finest whiskers in Germany. Not a little did this assurance comfort Rolandseck, who saw before him a long glorious race of progeny that should render his name famous for ever.

'When the time of the baroness's confinement drew near, her husband summoned all his principal fairy acquaintance to be witnesses of the birth and the christening:—the fairy Kalidora, of the fountain of youth; the fairy Odonta, of the pearls; the great enchanter Haarbart, who came from the Macassar coast, on a roaring fiery dragon, express to attend upon his friend.

'“This ointment,” said the enchanter Haarbart, presenting a vase full of a ruby-coloured unguent, “shall make the locks of your child as curly and glossy as the golden ringlets of Venus!”’ And so saying, Delamere passed his white fingers through his own hair, which was certainly the most beautiful I ever saw. Jemima evidently had the same opinion of it.

'“This rare powder,” said this fairy Odonta, “shall make the baby's teeth, as soon as it has them, and to the remotest old age, as pure and white as are the pearls in my native waters.”’

'What beautiful teeth Mr. Delamere has himself!’ whispered Jemima.

'“This flask of precious water,” said the fairy Kalidora, “shall cause the baby's cheek to be as beautifully white and red as the lilies and roses which compose the essence.”’

'Indeed, Mr. Delamere,' said the poor girl, simply, ‘one would think that you inherited the three fairies' gifts; for sure no one ever saw such beautiful teeth, hair, and complexion.’

'Madam, I HAVE *inherited them*,' answered the young man, blushing deeply; ‘and therefore I am bound to believe in the existence of fairies;—but to continue the tale:

'“As for riches and goodness,” said the three enchanters in a breath, “you, Sir Baron, are quite rich enough in all conscience; and are so good a man, that any child of yours can't fail to have the best of education and example. You will do more for it on this score than all of us fairies can do.”’

'The baron thanked his guests for their politeness, and longed for the time when he should press his darling son in his arms.



"As for the whiskers," said Haarbart, archly, "I guarantee them." At this instant the nurse burst into the room with a baby in her arms, and all the guns of the castle began roaring a salute. "I wish you joy," said the nurse, "my lady is quite well, and you have a little darling baby the very picture of you."

"My boy, my blessed boy! my fair-haired hope, my brave, my beautiful!" said the baron, addressing the child in that impassioned tone in which Mr. Macready apostrophises the little girl who acts his son in *William Tell*; "my own—own boy!"

"My lord," said the nurse, dropping a curtsey, "it's a dear little darling, sure enough—sure enough; but it's a girl!"

"A WHAT?" roared the baron, dropping the innocent thing as though it had been a hot potato—not a lovely smiling infant. "Fiend! unsay the word;"—but, of course, the nurse could not unsay the word, and ran off with the baby in the greatest fright in the world.

"Here's a pretty business!" said the enchanter Haarbart, and was so puzzled that he thought the best plan was to call for his dragon at once, and to fly off as fast as might be. The other two fairies looked at each other—at the poor baron, who was stamping and raging about the room—and could not help bursting out laughing; indeed it was a deuce of a perplexity, for what was spoken was spoken, and the oracle having once said the word whiskers, whiskers of course there must be. What words can paint the agony of Rolandseck, or describe his dreadful disappointment!

He became an altered, wretched man. He never once asked again to see his daughter, would not speak to his wife, and speedily announced his intention of going to the Holy Land, whither he went, with a gallant train of retainers, consigning his castle to the care of his brother, the Chevalier de Rolandseck.

Years rolled on; the baron never returned—never wrote a single line to his unhappy lady—but left her and her daughter to take care of themselves.

When Kalidora was seventeen, she had the most beautiful teeth, hair, and complexion of any lady in Germany—was a model of grace, virtue, and loveliness, and, as for the whiskers, had no more than grow on the palm of my hand. There was no more down upon her cheek than upon that of a peach—and it was pretty much the same colour. She could sing, dance, embroider, and play the harpsichord to perfection, and the young knights far and near came courting to her, and vowed that she was the fairest of the fair.

‘But though she might have a preference, as a young lady of her age and beauty naturally will; and though the young Count Maximilian Von Kalbsbraten had some idea that he was the person upon whom the lovely heiress had bestowed her heart’s young affections, neither Maximilian nor she had any opportunity of cultivating each other’s acquaintance much; for the fact was, there were domestic obstacles that stood sadly in the way of their mutual happiness.

‘The obstacle was no other than the wicked Chevalier de Rolandseck, a man of lawless passions and inordinate lust for gain; he could not behold the charms of his niece without emotion,—he could not think of the vast wealth to which she was heiress without longing to possess it. He sent to Rome and procured a dispensation from the Pope; he was in favour with the emperor, and got that monarch’s order to the young lady to espouse him. He had red hair—the worst teeth and complexion you ever saw—a hump back, and a mind as crooked as his person. As for the fairies’ gifts, which he would have done well to use (for even after shaving what is there that so allays the irritation as one of them, let alone the benefit it confers on the complexion?)—but no—he wouldn’t. He would not believe in the gifts of the fairies, although he saw their efficacy in Kalidora’s own person.

‘Such was the state of things when the lovely Kalidora was just about to attain her eighteenth year. On her birthday it was solemnly declared that she should wed her odious uncle. The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa vowed that he himself would be present at the nuptials; the wedding-clothes were ordered for the lady; and the most fashionable tailors from Vienna came down, in order to deck the bridegroom, and make his hump appear as little hideous as possible. This a tailor may do; but can he alter the hair? can he improve the complexion? can he make the teeth white which are naturally of a disgusting black? No. The very care which the Chevalier took to decorate his person only made him appear the more hateful to Kalidora. She asked to go into a cloister in vain; the Chevalier was too eager to possess her to consent. She could not commit suicide; the principles in which she had been brought up by her excellent mother forbade her. Ha! a sudden thought crossed her! She asked to be left alone for the fortnight previous to her marriage, promising that then she would accompany her uncle to the altar. That permission was granted to her—that solitude she asked she had.

“Bless us and save us!” said the waiting-woman, in examin-

ing her room after she left it on the fatal day (the girl knew the value of a fine head of hair, and used to make free with her lady's Macass—with the precious ointment that the enchanter Haarbart gave her)—“Bless us and save us!” said the maid, “there's not a single drop left in the bottle!”

‘The Lady Kalidora went forth, accompanied by her weeping mother; a veil of lace covered her fair features as she passed onward to the chapel of the castle. Banners were floating there, I wot, and organs solemn pealing. Tapers of huge size, in golden sconces, burned in the altars, and smoking incenses filled the lofty aisles. A magnificent company was assembled to witness the ceremonial, and Almaine's Emperor, with the crown of Charlemagne on his imperial brow, his brave electors and his peerless chivalry around him, stood waiting at the altar to give away the bride.

‘A hideous leer lighted up the ill-complexioned features of the bridegroom as he took the hand, so white, so soft, so clammy, and so passive, which the poor trembling girl was fain to give him, as, faltering, she tottered towards the shrine. Advancing then unto the altar-steps, the mighty Emperor Frederic Barbarossa said to the bride, “Lift up that envious veil—lift up that veil, my Lady Kalidora, that I may gaze upon your peerless face!”

‘The lady lifted up the veil, and laughed madly, and shrieked out, “Ha! ha! ha!” as she tumbled back into the arms of her mother.

‘The Lady Kalidora had a beard as big as Mr. Munty's.

‘Gentles, shall I tell you more? Shall I tell you how the base Chevalier shrunk from the union with the hapless bearded lady, and died speedily of the terror that the sight occasioned? Shall I tell you how young De Kalbsbraten, spite of the obstacle, would make her his own; how she refused for very shame; and though she shaved and shaved, the odious beard still grew? Shall I add, that at length a weary pilgrim, Roland of Rolandseck, returned to his father's halls, and found his daughter in the state described! *He cured her*; yes, he freed her cheek from superfluous hairs, that are the greatest detriment to beauty, by the use of a celebrated Depilatory, which he had discovered in the seraglios of Constantinople. The mention of the place where he obtained this made the old Lady of Rolandseck rather jealous; but she had suffered—he had suffered—they had all suffered, and they wisely determined to think no more of by-gones, but be happy.

‘From the Lady Kalidora of Rolandseck is descended a well-

known family of our own land, which still possesses the *gift of the fairies*.'

'O, sir! how I long to see some of them!' said Jemima, clapping her hands.

'You shall, miss,' said Delamere; and politely bowing to the ladies, he rose and left us.

Next morning, as I was walking out very early from Madame Frichs's inn, where we lodged at Godesberg, I saw a man in a blue velvet cap with a gold tassel, strawberry-cream-coloured trousers, and jean boots, placarding the walls with some papers, in English and German, about oil for the hair. He did not wait to see me, but sprang over a hedge, and left me to pursue my walk until breakfast.

My man put into my hands, on returning, a parcel, 'with Mr. Delamere's compliments'; it contained—

Four bottles	Rowland's	Macassar Oil,
Four ditto	ditto	Kalydor,
Four ditto	ditto	Odonto,
Two ditto	ditto	Depilatory,

with a request that I would pay the amount at the inn. As for the Depilatory, my ladies had no whiskers, luckily, to remove, and he might as well have left that out.

I am inclined to think, after all, that the fellow was an impostor, and no more connected with Rowland's house than I am. But I always tell the story to have a laugh against Miss Jemima (Mrs. Dick Dixon that is now), who chose to make game of her father, forsooth, about Ady's business. Ha, ha! madam, there are two can play at that, I warrant you.

## LITTLE SPITZ.

A LENTEN ANECDOTE FROM THE GERMAN OF PROFESSOR SPASS.

BY MICHAEL ANGELO TITMARSH.

‘I THINK,’ said Rebecca, flinging down her beautiful eyes to the ground, and heaving a great sigh,—‘I think, Signor Lorenzo, I could eat a bit of—sausage.’

‘Of *what?*’ said Lorenzo, bouncing up and forgetting all sense of politeness in the strange demand. ‘My dearest madam, *you* eat a sausage?’

‘Ha, ha, I’m blesht,’ shouted Abednego, Rebecca’s papa, ‘I’m blesht if Signor Lorenz does not think you want to eat the unclean animal, Rebecca, my soul’s darling. These shtudents are dull fellows, look you, and only know what’s in their books. Why, there are in dis vicked world no less than four hundred kindsh of shausages, Signor Lorenz, of which Herr Bürcke the court-butcher will show you the resheipts.—Confess, now, you thought my darling wanted to eat pig—faugh!’

Rebecca’s countenance, at the very idea, assumed an expression of the most intolerable disgust, and she gazed reproachfully at Lorenzo. That young man blushed and looked particularly foolish as he said :

‘Pardon me, dearest madam, for entertaining a thought so unworthy. *I did*, I confess, think of pork sausages, when you spoke, and although pretty learned on most subjects, am indeed quite ignorant upon the matter of which Herr Abednego has just been speaking.’

‘I told you so,’ says Abednego. ‘Why, my goot sir, dere is mutton-sausages, and veal-sausages, and beef-sausages, and——’

‘Silence, papa,’ said Rebecca, sharply, ‘for what has Signor Lorenz to do with such things? I’m very sorry that I—that I offended him by asking for any dish of the kind, and pray let him serve us with what he has.’

Rebecca sank down in a chair looking very faint ; but Lorenzo



started up and swore that he would have himself cut up into little pieces, stuffed into a bladder, and made sausage-meat of rather than that the lovely Israelite should go without the meat that she loved. And indeed such was the infatuated passion which this young man entertained for the Jewess, that I have not the least doubt but that he would have been ready to do as he said. 'I will send down immediately into the town,' continued he, 'and in ten minutes my messenger will be back again.'

'He must run very fast,' said the lady, appeased; 'but I thought you said, Signor Lorenz, that you kept but one servant, and that your old housekeeper was too ill to move?'



'Madam, make your mind quite easy. I have the best little messenger in the world.'

'Is it a fairy,' said the Jewess, 'or a household demon? They say that you great students have many such at your orders, and I should like to see one, of all things.'

'You shall see him, dearest lady,' replied the student, who took from the shelf a basket and napkin, put a piece of money into the basket (I believe the poor devil had not many of them), and wrote a few words on a paper which he set by the side of the coin. 'Mr. Bücke,' wrote he, '*Herr Hofmetzler*' (that is Mr. Court-Butcher), 'have the goodness to send per bearer, a rix-dollar's worth of the best sausages—not pork.' And then Lorenz opened his window, looked into his little garden, whistled, and shouted out: 'Hallo! Spitz!'

'Now,' said he, 'you shall see my familiar;' and a great scratching and whining was presently heard at the door, which made Rebecca wonder, and poor old fat Abednego turn as yellow as a parsnip. I warrant the old wretch thought that a demon with horns and a tail was coming into the room.

The familiar spirit which now made its appearance *had* a tail certainly, and a very long one for such a little animal; but there was nothing terrible about him. The fact is, it was Lorenz's little turnspit-dog, that used to do many such commissions for the student, who lived half a mile out of the city of Krähwinkel, where the little dog was perfectly well known. He was a very sagacious, faithful, ugly little dog, as ever was seen. He had a long black back and tail, and very little yellow legs, but he ran excessively fast on those little legs, and regularly fetched his master's meat and rolls from the city, and brought them to that lovely cottage which the student, for quiet's sake, occupied at a short distance from town.

'When I give him white money,' said Lorenz, caressing the little faithful beast, that wagged his tail between the calves of his master's legs, and looked up fondly in his face—'when I give him white money, he goes to the butcher's; when I give him copper he runs to the baker's—and was never yet known to fail. Go, my little Spitz, as fast as legs will carry thee. Go, my dog, and bring with thee the very best of sausages for the breakfast of the peerless Rebecca Abednego.' With this gallant speech, which pleased the lady greatly, and caused her to try to blush as much as possible, the little dog took the basket in his mouth, and trotted downstairs, and went off on his errand. While he is on the way to Krähwinkel and back, I may as well mention briefly who his master was, how he came to be possessed of this little animal, and how the fair Jewess had found her way to a Christian student's house.

Lorenz's parents lived in Polkwitz, which everybody knows is a hundred leagues from Krähwinkel. They were the most pious, orderly, excellent people ever known, and their son bade fair to equal them in all respects. He had come to Krähwinkel to study at the famous university there, but he never frequented the place except for the lectures; never made one at the noisy students' drinking-bouts; and was called for his piety and solitary life, the hermit.

The first year of his residence, he was to be seen not only at lectures, but at church, regularly. He never ate meat on a Friday; he fasted all through Lent; he confessed twice in a month, and was a model for all young students, not merely at Krähwinkel,

Bonn, Jena, Halle, and other German universities ; but those of Salamanca and the rest of Spain, of Bologna and other places of learning in Italy, nay, of Oxford and Cambridge in the island of England, would do well to take example by him, and lead the godly life which he led.

But I am sorry to say that learning oftentimes begets pride ; and Lorenzo Tisch, seeing how superior he was to all his companions—ay, and to most of the professors of the university—and plunging deeper and deeper daily into books, began to neglect his religious duties, at first a little, then a great deal, then to take no note of them at all ; for though, when the circumstances of this true history occurred, it was the season of Lent, Lorenzo Tisch had not the slightest recollection of the fact, not having been at church, or looked into an almanack or a prayer-book, for many months before.

Lorenzo was allowed a handsome income of a hundred rix-dollars per year by his parents, and used to draw this at the house of Mr. Abednego, the banker. One day, when he went to cash a draft for five dollars, Miss Rebecca Abednego happened to be in the room. Ah, Lorenzo, Lorenzo ! better for you to have remained at home studying the *Pons Asinorum* ; better still for you to have been at church listening to the soul-stirring discourses of Father Windbeutel ; better for you to have been less learned and more pious ; then you would not have been so likely to go astray, or allow your fancy to be inflamed by the charms of wicked Jewesses, that all Christian men should shun like poison.

Here it was Lent season—a holiday in Lent—and Lorenzo Tisch knew nothing about the matter, and Rebecca Abednego and her father were absolutely come to breakfast with him !

But though Lorenzo had forgotten Lent, the citizens of Krähwinkel had not, and especially one Herr Bürcke, the court-butcher, to whom Tisch had just despatched Spitz for a dollar's worth of sausage-meat.

The visits of Tisch to the Jew's house had indeed caused not a little scandal. The student's odd, lonely ways, his neglect of church, his queer little dog that ran of errands for him, had all been talked of by the townspeople, who had come at last to believe that Lorenzo was no less than a magician, and his dog, as he himself said in joke, his familiar spirit. Poor Spitz !—no familiar spirit wert thou : only a little, faithful, ugly dog,—a little dog that Tisch's aunt, Konisgunda, gave to him, who was equally fond of it and him.

Those who know Krähwinkel (and who, I should like to know, is not acquainted with that famous city ?) are aware that Mr.

Bürcke, the court-butcher, had his handsome shop in the Schnapps-Gasse, only a few doors from Abednego's banking-house. Mrs. Bürcke is, or used to be, a lady that was very fond of knowing the doings of her neighbours, and passed many hours staring out of her windows, of which the front row gave her a command of the whole of that beautiful street, the Schnapps-Gasse, while from the back the eye ranged over the gardens and summer-houses without the gates of the town, and the great road that goes to Bolkum. Herr Lorenzo's cottage was on this road; and it was by the Bolkum-gate that little Spitz entered with his basket when he went on his master's errands.

Now, on this day in Lent, it happened that Frau Bürcke was looking out of her window, instead of listening at church to Father Windbeutel, and she saw at eleven o'clock Mr. Israel Löwe, Herr Abednego's valet, porter, coachman, gardener, and cashier, bring round a certain chaise that the banker had taken for a bad debt, into which he stepped in his best snuff-coloured coat and silk stockings, handing in Miss Rebecca in a neat dress of yellow silk, a blue hat and pink feathers, and a pair of red morocco slippers, that set off her beautiful ankle to advantage.

'Odious people!' said Mrs. Bürcke, looking at the pair that Mr. Löwe was driving; 'odious, vulgar horse!' (Herr Bürcke kept only that one on which his lad rode.) 'Roman-nosed beast! I shouldn't wonder but that the horse is a Jew, too!'—and she saw the party turn down to the left into Bolkum-Strasse, towards the gate which I have spoken of before. When Madame Bürcke saw this, she instantly flew from her front window to her back window, and there had a full view of the Bolkum-road, and the Abednego coach jingling up the same. Mr. Löwe, when they came to the hill, got off the box and walked; Mr. Abednego sat inside and smoked his pipe.

'*Ey du lieber Himmel!*' screamed out Mrs. Bürcke: 'they have stopped at the necromancer's door!'

It was so that she called the worthy Tisch; and she was perfectly right in saying that the Israelitish cavalcade had stopped at the gate of his cottage; where also appeared Lorenzo bowing, in his best coat, and offering his arm to lead Miss Rebecca in.

Mrs. Bürcke could not see how he trembled as he performed this work of politeness, or what glances Miss Rebecca shot forth from her great wicked black eyes. Having set down his load, Mr. Israel again mounted his box, and incontinently drove away.

'Here comes that horrid little dog with the basket,' continued Mrs. Bürcke, after a few minutes more of looking out of the window:—and now, is not everything explained relative to

Herr Lorenzo Tisch, Miss Rebecca Abednego, and the little dog?

Mrs. Bürcke hated Spitz : the fact is, he once bit a hole in one of her great, round, mottled arms, which had thrust itself into the basket that Spitz carried for his master's provisions ; for Mrs. B. was very anxious to know what there was under the napkin. In consequence, therefore, of this misunderstanding between her and the dog, whenever she saw the animal it was Mrs. B.'s custom to salute him with many foul words and curses, and to compass how to do him harm : for the *Frau Hofmetzlerin*, as she was called in Krähwinkel, was a lady of great energy and perseverance, and nobody could ever accuse her of forgetting an injury.

The little dog, as she sat meditating evil against him, came trotting down the road, entered as usual by the Bolkum-gate, turned to the right, and by the time Frau Bürcke had descended to the shop, there he was at the door, sure enough, and entered it wagging his tail. It was a holiday in Lent, and the butcher-boys were absent ; Mr. Bürcke himself was abroad ; there was not a single joint of meat in the shop, nor ought there to be at such a season, when all good men eat fish. But how was poor Spitz to know what the season was, or tell what his master himself had forgotten ?

He looked a little shy when he saw only Frau Bürcke in the shop, doubtless remembering his former disagreement with her ; but a sense of duty at last prevailed with him, and he jumped up on his usual place on the counter, laid his basket down, whined, and began flapping the place on which he sat with his tail.

Mrs. Bürcke advanced, and held out her great mottled arm rather fearfully ; he growled, and made her start a little, but did her no harm. She took the paper out of the basket, and read what we have before imparted to the public : viz., '*Mr. Court-Butcher, have the goodness to send per bearer a rix-dollar's worth of best sausage-meat, NOT pork.*—LORENZ TISCH.' As she read, the dog wagged his tail more violently than before.

A horrible thought entered the bosom of Mrs. Bürcke as she looked at the dog, and from the dog glanced at her husband's cleaver, that hung idly on the wall.

'Sausages in Lent!' said Mrs. Bürcke ; 'sausages to be fetched by a dog for that heathen necromancer and that accursed Jew. He *shall* have sausages with a vengeance!' Mrs. Bürcke took down the cleaver, and——

About twenty minutes afterwards Herr Lorenzo Tisch opened



his garden gate, whither he had been summoned by the whining and scratching of his little faithful messenger. Spitz staggered in, laid the basket at his master's feet, licked his hand, and fell down.

'Blesh us, dere'sh something red all along the road!' cried Mr. Abednego.

'Pshaw! papa, never mind that; let's look at the sausages,' said his daughter Rebecca—a sad gormandiser for so young a woman.

Tisch opened the basket, staggered back, and turned quite sick. In the basket which Spitz had carried so faithfully lay the poor little dog's OWN TAIL!

What took place during the rest of the entertainment I have never been able or anxious to learn; but this I know, that there is a single gentleman now living with Madame Konisgunda Von Speck, in the beautiful town of Polkwitz—a gentleman who, if he has one prejudice in the world, has that of hating the Jewish nation—a gentleman who goes to church regularly, and, above all, never eats meat in Lent.

He is followed about by a little dog—a little ugly dog—of which he and Madame Von Speck are outrageously fond; although, between ourselves, the animal's back is provided with no more tail than a cannon-ball.



## SULTAN STORK.

BEING THE ONE THOUSAND AND SECOND NIGHT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE PERSIAN BY MAJOR G. O'G. GAHAGAN, H.E.I.C.S.

### PART THE FIRST.—THE MAGIC POWDER.

‘AFTER those long wars,’ began Scheherazade, as soon as her husband had given the accustomed signal,—‘after those long wars in Persia, which ended in the destruction of the ancient and monstrous Ghebir, or fire-worship, in that country, and the triumph of our holy religion : for though, my lord, the Persians are Soonies by creed, and not followers of Omar, as every true believer in the prophet ought to be, nevertheless——’

‘A truce to your nevertheless, madam,’ interrupted the Sultan, ‘I want to hear a story, and not a controversy.’

‘Well, sir, after the expulsion of the Ahrimaniens, King Abdulraman governed Persia worthily until he died after a surfeit of peaches, and left his throne to his son Mushook, or the Beautiful,—a title, by the way,’ remarked Scheherazade, blushing and casting down her lovely eyes, ‘which ought at present to belong to your majesty.’

Although the Sultan only muttered, 'Stuff and nonsense, get along with you,' it was evident by the blush in the royal countenance, and the smile which lightened up the black waves of the imperial beard, as a sunbeam does the sea, that his majesty was pleased, and that the storm was about to disappear. Scheherazade continued :—

'Mushook, ascending the throne, passed honourably the first year of his reign in perfecting the work so happily begun by his royal father. He caused a general slaughter of all the Ghebirs in his land to take place, not only of the royal family, but of the common sort ; nor of the latter did there remain any unkilld (if I may coin such a word) or unconverted : and, as to the former, they were extirpated root and branch, with the exception of one most dogged enchanter and Ahrimanian, Ghuzroo by name, who with his son Ameen-Adhawb, managed to escape out of Persia, and fled to India, where still existed some remnants of their miserably superstitious race. But Bombay is a long way from Persia, and at the former place it was that Ghuzroo and his son took refuge, giving themselves up to their diabolical enchantments and worship, and calling themselves king and prince of Persia. For them, however, their plans and their pretensions, King Mushook little cared, often singing, in allusion to them, those well-known verses of Hafiz :—

'Buldoo says that he is the rightful owner of the rice-field,  
And declares that the lamb is his undisputed property.  
Brag, O Buldoo, about your rights and your possessions ;  
But the lamb and rice are his who dines on the pillau.'

The Sultan could hardly contain himself for laughing at this admirable epigram, and, without farther interruption, Scheherazade continued her story :—

'King Mushook was then firmly established on his throne, and had for his vizier that famous and worthy statesman Munsoor ; one of the ugliest and oldest, but also one of the wisest of men, and attached beyond everything to the Mushook dynasty, though his teeth had been knocked out by the royal slipper.'

'And, no doubt, Mushook served him right,' observed the Sultan.

'Though his teeth had been knocked out, yet wisdom and persuasion ever hung on his lips ; though one of his eyes, in a fit of royal indignation, had been closed for ever, yet no two eyes in all the empire were as keen as his remaining ball ; he was, in a word, the very best and honestest of viziers, as fat and merry, too, as he was wise and faithful.

‘One day as Shah Mushook was seated after dinner in his beautiful garden-pavilion at Tehran, sick of political affairs, which is no wonder,—sick even of the beautiful houris who had been dancing before him to the sound of lutes and mandolins—tired of the jokes and antics of his buffoons and story-tellers—let me say at once dyspeptic, and in a shocking ill-humour; old Munsoor (who had already had the royal pipe and slippers flung half-a-dozen times at his head), willing by any means to dissipate his master’s ill-will, lighted in the outer courts of the palace, as he was hieing disconsolately home, upon an old pedlar-woman, who was displaying her wares to a crowd of wondering persons and palace servants, and making them die with laughing at her jokes.

‘The vizier drew near, heard her jokes,<sup>1</sup> and examined her wares, which were extraordinarily beautiful, and determined to conduct her into the august presence of the king.

‘Mushook was so pleased with her stock-in-trade, that, like a royal and generous prince, he determined to purchase her whole pack, box, trinkets, and all; giving her her own price for them. So she yielded up her box, only taking out of one of the drawers a little bottle, surrounded by a paper, not much bigger than an ordinary bottle of Macassar oil.’

‘Macassar oil! Here’s an anachronism!’ thought the Sultan. But he suffered his wife to proceed with her tale.

‘The old woman was putting this bottle away into her pocket, when the sultan’s eye lighted upon it, and he asked her in a fury, why she was making off with his property?’

‘She said she had sold him the whole pack, with the exception of that bottle; and that it could be of no good to him, as it was only a common old crystal bottle, a family piece, of no sort of use to any but the owner.

“‘What is there in the bottle?’ exclaimed the keen and astute vizier.

At this the old woman blushed as far as her weazened old face could blush, hemmed, ha’d, stuttered, and showed evident signs of confusion. She said it was only a common bottle—that there was nothing in it—that is, only a powder—a little rhubarb.

“‘It’s poison!’ roared Mushook; ‘I’m sure it’s poison!’ And he forthwith seized the old hag by the throat, and would have strangled her, if the vizier had not wisely interposed, remarking, that if the woman were strangled there could be no means of knowing what the bottle contained.

“‘To show you, sire, that it is not poison,’ cried the old

<sup>1</sup> These, as they have no sort of point except for the Persian scholar, are here entirely omitted.—G. O’G. G.

creature to the king, who by this time had wrenched the bottle out of her pocket, and held it in his hand, "I will take a little of the powder it contains." Whereupon his majesty called for a teaspoon, determined to administer the powder to her himself. The chief of the eunuchs brought the teaspoon, the king emptied a little of the powder into it, and bidding the old wretch open her great, black, gaping, ruinous mouth, put a little of the powder on her tongue; when, to his astonishment, and as true as I sit here, her old hooked beak of a nose (which, by way of precaution, he was holding in his fingers) slipped from between them; the old, black tongue, on which he placed the teaspoon, disappeared from under it; and not only the nose and the tongue, but the whole old woman vanished away entirely, and his majesty stood there with his two hands extended—the one looking as if it pulled an imaginary nose, the other holding an empty teaspoon; and he himself staring wildly at vacancy!

'Scheherazade,' said the Sultan, gravely, 'you are drawing the long bow a little too strongly. In the thousand and one nights that we have passed together, I have given credit to every syllable you uttered. But this tale about the old women, my love, is, upon my honour, too monstrous.'

'Not a whit, sir; and I assure your majesty that it is as true as the Koran itself. It is a fact perfectly well authenticated, and written afterwards, by King Mushook's orders, in the Persian annals. The old woman vanished altogether; the king was left standing there with the bottle and spoon; the vizier was dumb with wonder; and the only thing seen to quit the room was a little canary-bird, that suddenly started up before the king's face, and chirping out "kikiriki," flew out of the open window, skimmed over the ponds and plane-trees in the garden, and was last seen wheeling round and round the minaret of the great mosque of Tehran.'

'Mashallah!' exclaimed the Sultan. 'Heaven is great: but I never should have credited the tale, had not you, my love, vouched for it. Go on, madam, and tell us what became of the bottle and Sultan Mushook.'

'Sir, when the king had recovered from his astonishment, he fell, as his custom was, into a fury, and could only be calmed by the arguments and persuasions of the grand vizier.

"It is evident, sire," observed that dignitary, "that the powder which you have just administered possesses some magic property; either to make the persons taking it invisible, or else to cause them to change into the form of some bird or other animal; and very possibly the canary-bird which so suddenly appeared



and disappeared just now, was the very old woman with whom your majesty was talking. We can easily see whether the powder creates invisibility, by trying its effects upon some one—the chief of the eunuchs, for example.” And accordingly Hudge Gudge, the chief of the eunuchs, against whom the vizier had an old grudge, was compelled, with many wry faces, to taste the mixture.

“Thou art so ugly, Hudge Gudge,” exclaimed the vizier with a grin, “that to render thee invisible, will only be conferring a benefit upon thee.” But, strange to say, though the eunuch was made to swallow a large dose, the powder had no sort of effect upon him, and he stood before his majesty and the prime minister as ugly and as visible as ever.

‘They now thought of looking at the paper in which the bottle was wrapped, and the king, not knowing how to read himself, bade the grand vizier explain to him the meaning of the writing which appeared upon the paper.

‘But the vizier confessed, after examining the document, that he could not understand it; and though it was presented at the divan that day, to all the councillors, mollahs, and men learned in the law, not one of them could understand a syllable of the strange characters written on the paper. The council broke up in consternation; for his majesty swore, that if the paper was not translated before the next day at noon, he would bastinado every one of the privy council, beginning with his excellency the grand vizier.

“Who has such a sharp wit as necessity?” touchingly exclaims the poet Sadee, and so, in corroboration of the words of that divine songster, the next day at noon, sure enough, a man was found—a most ancient, learned, and holy dervish, who knew all the languages under the sun, and, by consequence, that in which the paper was written.

‘It was in the most secret Sanscrit tongue; and when the dervish read it, he requested that he might communicate its contents privately to his majesty, or at least only in the presence of his first minister.

‘Retiring then to the private apartments with the vizier, his majesty bade the dervish interpret the meaning of the writing round the bottle.

“The meaning, sire, is this,” said the learned dervish. “Whoever, after bowing his head three times to the east——”

“The old woman waggled hers,” cried the king: “I remarked it, but thought it was only palsy.”

“Whoever, after bowing his head three times to the east,

swallows a grain of this powder, may change himself into whatever animal he please: be it beast, or insect, or bird. Likewise, when he is so changed, he will know the language of beasts, insects, and birds, and be able to answer each after his kind. And when the person so transformed desires to be restored to his own shape, he has only to utter the name of the god 'Budgaroo,' who himself appeared upon earth in the shape of beasts, birds, ay, and fishes,<sup>1</sup> and he will instantly resume his proper figure. But let the person using this precious powder especially beware, that during the course of his metamorphosis he do not give way to laughter; for should he indulge in any such unholy mirth, his memory will infallibly forsake him, and not being able to recall the talismanic word, he will remain in the shape into which he has changed himself."

'When this strange document had been communicated to his majesty, he caused the dervish's mouth to be filled with sugar-candy, gave him a purse of gold, and bade him depart with every honour.

"You had better at least have waited," said the shrewd vizier, "to see if the interpretation be correct, for who can tell whether this dervish is deceiving us or no?"

'King Mushook rejoined that that point should be put at rest at once, and, grimly smiling, ordered the vizier to take a pinch of powder, and change himself into whatever animal he pleased.

'Munsoor had nothing for it but to wish himself a dog; he turned to the east, nodded his head thrice, swallowed the powder, and lo! there he was—a poodle—an old, fat, lame, one-eyed poodle; whose appearance made his master laugh inordinately, though Munsoor himself, remembering the prohibition and penalty, was far too wise to indulge in any such cachinnation.

'Having satisfied his royal master by his antics, the old vizier uttered the requisite word, and was speedily restored to his former shape.

'And now I might tell how the King of Persia and his faithful attendant indulged themselves in all sorts of transformations by the use of the powder; how they frequented the society of all manner of beasts, and gathered a deal of wisdom from their conversation; how perching on this housetop in the likeness of sparrows, they peered into all the family secrets of the proprietors; how buzzing into that harem window in the likeness of blue-bottle flies, they surveyed at their leisure the beauties within, and enjoyed the confusion of the emirs and noblemen when they described

<sup>1</sup> In Professor Schwam's 'Sanskritische Alterthumskunde' is a learned account of the transmutations of this Indian divinity.—G. O'G. G.

to them at divan every particular regarding the shape, and features, and dress of the ladies they kept so secretly in the anderoon. One of these freaks had like to have cost the king dear; for sitting on Hassan Ebu Suneebee's wall, looking at Bulkous, his wife, and lost in admiration of that moon of beauty, a spider issued out from a crevice, and had as nearly as possible gobbled up the King of Persia. This event was a lesson to him, therefore; and he was so frightened by it, that he did not care for the future to be too curious about other people's affairs, or at least to take upon himself the form of such a fragile thing as a blue-bottle fly.

'One morning—indeed I believe on my conscience that his majesty and the vizier had been gadding all night, or they never could have been abroad so early—they were passing those large swampy grounds, which everybody knows are in the neighbourhood of Tehran, and where the Persian lords are in the habit of hunting herons with the hawk. The two gentlemen were disguised, I don't know how; but seeing a stork by the side of the pool, stretching its long neck, and tossing about its legs very queerly, King Mushook felt suddenly a longing to know what these motions of the animal meant, and taking upon themselves likewise the likeness of storks (the vizier's dumpy nose stretched out into a very strange bill, I promise you), they both advanced to the bird at the pool, and greeted it in the true storkish language.

'“Good-morning, Mr. Long Bill,” said the stork (a female), curtsying politely, “you are abroad early to-day; and the sharp air, no doubt, makes you hungry: here is half an eel which I beg you to try, or a frog, which you will find very fat and tender.” But the royal stork was not inclined to eat frogs, being no Frank.'

'Have a care, Scheherazade,' here interposed the Sultan. 'Do you mean to tell me that there are any people, even among the unbelievers, who are such filthy wretches as to eat frogs?—Bah! I can't believe it!'

Scheherazade did not vouch for the fact, but continued. 'The king declined the proffered breakfast, and presently falling into conversation with the young female stork, bantered her gaily about her presence in such a place of a morning, and without her mamma, praised her figure and the slimness of her legs (which made the young stork blush till she was almost as red as a flamingo), and paid her a thousand compliments that made her think the stranger one of the most delightful creatures she had ever met.

'“Sir,” said she, “we live in some reeds hard by; and as my

mamma, one of the best mothers in the world, who fed us children with her own blood when we had nothing else for dinner, is no more, my papa, who is always lazy, has bidden us to look out for ourselves. You were pleased just now to compliment my I—— my *limbs*,” says the stork, turning her eyes to the ground; “and the fact is, that I wish to profit, sir, by those graces with which nature endowed me, and am learning to dance. I came out here to practise a little step that I am to perform before some friends this morning, and here, sir, you have my history.”

“I do pray and beseech you to let us see the rehearsal of the step,” said the king, quite amused; on which the young stork, stretching out her scraggy neck, and giving him an ogle with her fish-like eyes, fell to dancing and capering in such a ridiculous way, that the king and vizier could restrain their gravity no longer, but burst out into an immoderate fit of laughter. I do not know that Munsoor would have laughed of his own accord, for he was a man of no sort of humour; but he made it a point whenever his master laughed always to roar too; and in this instance his servility cost him dear.

‘The young female stork, as they were laughing, flew away in a huff, and thought them, no doubt, the most ill-mannered brutes in the world. When they were restored to decent gravity, the king voted that they should resume their shapes again, and hie home to breakfast. So he turned himself round to the east, bobbed his head three times according to the receipt, and—

“Vizier,” said he, “what the deuce is the word?—Hudge, kudge, fudge,—what is it?”

‘The vizier had forgotten too; and then the conditions annexed to the charm came over these wretched men, and they felt they were storks for ever. In vain they racked their poor brains to discover the word—they were no wiser at the close of the day than at the beginning, and at nightfall were fain to take wing from the lonely morass where they had passed so many miserable hours, and seek for shelter somewhere.’

#### PART THE SECOND.—THE ENCHANTED PRINCESS.

AFTER flying about for some time, the poor storks perched upon the palace, where it was evident that all was in consternation. “Ah!” said the king, with a sigh, “why, O cursed vizier, didst thou ever bring that beggar-woman into my presence? here it is, an hour after sunset, and at this hour I should have been seated

at a comfortable supper, but for thy odious officiousness, and my own fatal curiosity."

'What his majesty said was true; and, having eaten nothing all day (for they could not make up their stomachs to subsist upon raw frogs and fish), he saw, to his inexpressible mortification, his own supper brought into the royal closet at the usual hour, taken away from thence, and the greater part of it eaten up by the servants as they carried it back to the kitchen.



'For three days longer, as they lingered about Tehran, that city was in evident dismay and sorrow. On the first day a council was held, and a great deal of discussion took place between the mollahs and emirs; on the second day another council was held, and all the mollahs and emirs swore eternal fidelity to King Mushook; on the third day a third council was held, and they voted to a man that all faithful Persians had long desired the return of their rightful sovereign and worship, and proclaimed Ghuzroo Sultan of Persia. Ghuzroo and his son, Ameen-Adhawl, entered the divan. What a thrill passed through the bosom of Mushook (who was perched on a window of the hall) when he



saw Ghuzroo walk up and take possession of his august throne, and beheld in the countenance of that unbeliever the traits of the very old woman who had sold him the box !

‘It would be tedious to describe to your majesty the numberless voyages and the long dreary flights which the unhappy sultan and vizier now took. There is hardly a mosque in all Persia or Arabia on which they did not light ; and as for frogs and fishes, they speedily learned to be so little particular as to swallow them raw with considerable satisfaction, and, I do believe, tried every pond and river in Asia.

‘At last they came to India ; and being then somewhere in the neighbourhood of Agra, they went to take their evening meal at a lake in a wood : the moon was shining on it, and there was upon one of the trees an owl hooting and screaming in the most melancholy manner.

‘The two wanderers were discussing their victuals, and it did not at first come into their heads to listen to the owl’s bewailings ; but as they were satisfied, they began presently to hearken to the complaints of the bird of night that sate on a mango-tree, its great round white face shining in the moon. The owl sung a little elegy, which may be rendered in the following manner :—

“ *Too—too—too—oo* long have I been in imprisonment ;

*Who—o—o—o* is coming to deliver me ?

In the darkness of the night I look out, and see not my deliverer ;

I make the grove resound with my strains, but no one hears me.

“ I look out at the moon ;—my face was once as fair as hers ;

She is the queen of night, and I was a princess as celebrated.

I sit under the cypress-trees, and was once as thin as they are :

Could their dark leaves compare to my raven tresses ?

“ I was a princess once, and my talents were everywhere sung of ;

I was indebted for my popularity not only to beauty but *to whit* ;

Ah, where is the destined prince that is to come to liberate, and  
*to whoo ? ”*

‘Cut the verses short, Scheherazade,’ said the Sultan. And that obedient princess instantly resumed her story in prose.

“ What,” said King Mushook, stepping up to the owl, “are you too the victim of enchantment ? ”

“ Alas ! kind stranger, of whatever feather you be—for the moon is so bright that I cannot see you in the least,—I was a princess, as I have just announced in my poem ; and famous, I may say, for my beauty all over India. Rotu Muckun is my name, and my father is King of Hindostan. A monster from Bombay, an idolater and practiser of enchantments, came to my

court and asked my hand for his son : but because I spurned the wretch, he, under the disguise of an old woman——”

““With a box of trinkets,” broke out the vizier.

““Of no such thing,” said the owl, or rather the disguised Princess Rotu Muckun ; “with a basket of peaches, of which I was known to be fond, entered the palace garden one evening as I was seated there with my maidens, and offered me a peach, of which I partook, and was that instant turned into an owl. My attendants fled, screaming at the metamorphosis ; and as the old woman went away, she clenched her fist at me and laughed, and said, ‘Now, princess, you will remember the vengeance of Ghuzroo.’”

““This *is* indeed marvellous !” exclaimed the King of Persia. “Know, madam, that the humble individual who now addresses you was a year since no other than Persia’s king.”

““Heavens !” said the princess, trembling, and rustling all her feathers ; “can you be the famous and beautiful Mushook, who disappeared from Tehran with his grand vizier ?”

““No other, madam,” said the king, laying his claw on his breast ; “and the most devoted of your servants.”

““Heigho !” said she ; “I would that you had resumed your former shape, and that what you said were true ; but you men, I have always heard, are sad, sad deceivers !”

“Being pressed farther to explain the meaning of her wish, the princess said that she never could resume her former appearance until she could find some one who would marry her under her present form ; and what was more, she said, an old Brahmin had made a prophecy concerning her, that she should be saved from destruction by a stork.

““This speech,” said the vizier, drawing his majesty aside, “is the sheerest and most immodest piece of fiction on the part of Madam Owl that ever I heard. What is the upshot of it ? The hideous old wretch, pining for a husband, and not being able on account of her age and ugliness, doubtless, to procure one among birds of her own degree, sees us two slim, elegant, fashionable fellows pass, and trumps up instantly a story about her being a princess, and the deuce knows what. Even suppose she be a princess, let your majesty remember what the poet Ferroz observes——

Women are not all beautiful—for one moon-eyed,  
Nine hundred and ninety-nine are as ugly as Shaitan.

Let us have a care, then, how we listen to her stories.”

"Vizier," answered his majesty, "I have remarked that you are always talking about ugliness; and, by my beard! you are the ugliest man in my dominions. Be she handsome or hideous, I am sure that there is something in the story of the princess mysteriously connected with our fate. Do you not remember that extraordinary dream which I had in my youth, and which declared that I too should be saved from danger by an owl? Had you not also such a dream on the self-same night? Let us not, therefore, disregard the warnings of Fate:—the risk shall be run, the princess shall be married, or my name's not Mushook."

"Well, sir," said the vizier, with a shrug, "if you insist upon marrying her, I cannot, of course, give any objection to the royal will: and your majesty must remember that I wash my hands of the business altogether."

"*I marry her!*" screamed the king, in a rage; "vizier, are you a fool? Do you suppose me such a fool as to buy a pig in a poke, as they say in Bagdad?"

"I was sure your majesty would not be so imprudent," said the vizier, in a soothing tone.

"Of course, I wouldn't; no, vizier, my old and tried servant, *you* shall marry the Princess Rotu Muckun, and incur the risk of this adventure."

The poor vizier knew he had only to obey, were his master to bid him to bite off his own nose; so he promised compliance in this instance with as good a grace as he could muster. But the gentlemen, in the course of this little dispute, had not taken into consideration that the owl had wings as well as they, and had followed them into the dark brake where the colloquy took place, and could see them perfectly, and hear every word that passed.

"Tut-tut-tut-too!" shrieked out the owl, in a shrill voice, "my lord of Persia, and you, grand vizier, do you suppose that I, the Princess of Hindostan, am to be cast about from one person to another like a shuttlecock? Do you suppose that I, the loveliest woman in the universe, am tamely to listen to doubts regarding my beauty, and finally to yield up my charms to an ugly, old, decrepit monster, like your grand vizier?"

"Madam——" interposed the King of Persia.

"Tut-tut-too! don't madam me, sir," said the princess, in a fluster,—"*mademoiselle*, if you please; and *mademoiselle* to remain, rather than be insulted so. Talk about buying a pig in a poke, indeed! here is a pretty gentlemanlike phrase for a monarch who has been used to good society!—pig in a poke, indeed! I'll tell you what, my lord, I have a great mind to make you carry your pigs to another market. And as for my

poor person, I will see," cried the owl, sobbing, "if some noble-hearted person be not more favourable to-to-to to-*it*-to-oo-oo-oo-oo!" Here she set up such an hysterical howling, that his majesty the King of Persia thought she would have dropped off her perch.

'He was a good-natured sovereign, and could not bear to see the tears of a woman.'

'What a fool!' said the Sultan. But Scheherazade took no notice.

'And having his heart melted by her sorrows, said to her, "Cheer up, madam, it shall never be said that Mushook deserted a lady in distress. I swear to you by the ninth book of the Koran, that you shall have my hand as soon as I get it back myself; in the meanwhile accept my claw, and with it the heart of the King of Persia."

'Oh, sir!' said the owl, "this is too great joy—too much honour—I cannot," said she, in a faint voice, "bear it!—O Heavens!—Maidens, unlace me!—Some water—some water—a jug-jug-jug——"

'Here what the king had formerly feared actually took place, and the owl, in an excess of emotion, actually tumbled off the branch in a fainting fit, and fell into the thicket below.

'The vizier and his majesty ran like mad to the lake for water; but ah! what a scene met their view on coming back!

'Forth there came to meet them the loveliest damsel that ever greeted the eyes of monarch or vizier. Fancy, sir, a pair of eyes——'

'Cut the description short, Scheherazade,' interrupted the Sultan; 'your eyes, my dear, are quite pretty enough for me.'

'In short, sir, she was the most lovely woman in the world of her time; and the poor old vizier, as he beheld her, was mad to think what a prize he had lost. The King of Persia flung himself at her feet, and vowed himself to be the happiest of men.'

'Happiest of men!' roared out the Sultan. 'Why, woman, he is a stork: how did he get back to his shape, I want to know?'

'Why, sir, it must be confessed, that when the Princess of Hindostan, now restored to her pristine beauty, saw that no sort of change had taken place in her affianced husband, she felt a little ashamed of the connexion, and more than once in their journey from Agra to the court of her father at Delhi, she thought of giving her companion the slip. "For how," said she, "am I to marry a stork?" However, the king would never leave her for a moment out of his sight, or, when his majesty

slept, the vizier kept his eye upon her; and so at last they walked and walked until they came near to Delhi on the banks of the Jumna.

‘A magnificent barge was floating down the river, pulled by a hundred men with gilded oars, and dressed in liveries of cloth-of-gold. The prow of the barge was shaped like a peacock, and formed of precious stones and enamel; and at the stern of the vessel was an awning of crimson silk, supported by pillars of silver, under which, in a yellow satin robe, covered with diamonds of intolerable brightness, there sat an old gentleman smoking, and dissolved seemingly in grief.

“Heavens!” cried the Princess, “’tis my father!” and straightway she began flapping her pocket-handkerchief, and crying at the top of her voice, “Father, father, ’tis your Rotu Muckun calls!”

‘When the old gentleman, who was smoking in yellow satin, heard that voice, he started up wildly, let drop his hookah, shouted hoarsely to the rowers to pull to the shore, and the next minute tumbled backwards in a fainting fit.—The next minute but one he was in the arms of his beloved girl, the proudest and happiest of fathers.

‘The princess at the moment of meeting, and in the hurry of running into the boat, had, it must be confessed, quite forgotten her two storks; and as these made an effort to follow her, one of the rowers with his gilded oar gave the grand vizier a crack over the leg, which caused that poor functionary to limp for many years after. But our wanderers were not to be put off so. Taking wing, they flew right under the awning of the boat, and perched down on the sofa close by the King of Hindostan and his daughter.

“What, in Heaven’s name,” said Hindostan, “are these filthy birds, that smell so horribly of fish? Faugh! turn them out.”

“Filthy yourself, sir, my brother,” answered the King of Persia, “the smell of fish is not much worse than that of tobacco, I warrant. Heigho! I have not had a pipe for many a long day!”

‘Here Rotu Muckun, seeing her father’s wonder that a stork should talk his language, and his anger at the bird’s impudence, interposed and related to his majesty all the circumstances attending the happy change that had taken place.

‘While she was speaking (and her story was a pretty long one), the King of Persia flung himself back in an easy attitude on one of the sofas, crossing his long legs, and folding his wings



over his chest. He was, to tell the truth, rather piqued at the reception which his brother of Hindostan had given him. Old Munsoor stood moodily at a little distance, holding up his game leg.

‘His master, however, was determined to show that he was perfectly at his ease. “Hindostan, my old buck,” said he, “what a deuced comfortable sofa this is; and, egad, what a neat turn-out of a barge.”

‘The old gentleman, who was a stickler for ceremony, said drily, “I am glad your majesty finds the sofa comfortable, and the barge to your liking. Here we don’t call it a barge, but a BUDGEROW.”

‘As he spoke this word, the King of Persia bounced off his seat as if he had been shot, and upset the hookah over the King of Hindostan’s legs; the moody old grand vizier clapped his wings and screamed for joy; the princess shrieked for astonishment; and the whole boat’s crew were in wonder, as they saw the two birds turn towards the east, bob their long bills three times, and call out “Budgerow!”

‘At that word the birds disappeared, and in their place, before the astonished sovereign of Hindostan there stood two gentlemen in the Persian habit. One of them was fat, old, and one-eyed, of a yellow complexion, and limping on a leg—’twas Munsoor, the vizier. The other—ah, what a thrill passed through Rotu Muckun’s heart as she beheld him!—had a dark countenance, a dark flashing eye, a royal black beard, a high forehead, on which a little Persian cap was jauntily placed. A pelisse of cashmere and sables covered his broad chest, and showed off his excessively slim waist to advantage; his little feet were encased in yellow slippers; when he spoke, his cornelian lips displayed thirty-two pearly teeth; in his girdle was his sword, and on the hilt of it that famous diamond, worth one hundred and forty-three millions of tomauns.

‘When the king of Hindostan saw that diamond, he at once knew that Mushook could be no impostor, and taking him heartily by the hand, the good-natured monarch ordered servants to pick up the pieces of the chillum, and to bring fresh ones for the King of Persia and himself.

‘“You say it is a long time since you smoked a pipe,” said Hindostan, waggishly; “there is a lady here that I dare swear will fill one for you.” With this and other sallies the royal party passed on to Delhi, where Munsoor was accommodated with diaculum and surgical aid, and where the marriage was celebrated between the King of Persia and the Princess of Hindostan.’

‘And did the King of Persia ever get his kingdom back again?’ asked the Sultan.

‘Of course he did, sir,’ replied Scheherazade, ‘for where did you ever hear of a king who had been kept out of his just rights by a wicked enchanter, that did not regain his possessions at the end of a story? No, sir, at the last page of a tale, wicked enchanters are always punished, and suffering virtue always rewarded; and though I have my doubts whether in real life——’

‘Be hanged to your prate, madam, and let me know at once *how* King Mushook got back his kingdom, and what he did to Ghuzroo and his son Ameen-Adhawb?’

‘Why, sir, marching with five hundred thousand men, whom his father-in-law placed under his command, King Mushook went, viâ Cabul and Afghanistan, into Persia; he defeated the usurping Ghuzroo upon the plains of Tehran, and caused that idolatrous monarch to be bastinadoed to death. As for his son, Ameen-Adhawb, as that young prince had not taken any part in his father’s rebellion, Mushook, who was a merciful sovereign, only ordered him to take a certain quantity of the powder and to wish himself to be a stork. Then he put him into a cage, and hung him outside the palace wall. This done, Mushook and his princess swayed magnificently the sceptre of Persia, lived happily, were blest by their subjects, had an infinite number of children, and ate pillau and rice every day.

‘Now, sir, it happened, after several years’ captivity in the cage, that the Prince Ameen-Adhawb——’

Here Scheherazade paused; for, looking at her royal husband, she saw that his majesty was fast asleep, and deferred the history of Prince Ameen-Adhawb until another occasion.

## BLUEBEARD'S GHOST.

For some time after the fatal accident which deprived her of her husband, Mrs. Bluebeard was, as may be imagined, in a state of profound grief.

There was not a widow in all the country who went to such an expense for black bombazeen. She had her beautiful hair confined in crimped caps, and her weepers came over her elbows. Of course she saw no company except her sister Anne (whose company was anything but pleasant to the widow); as for her brothers, their odious mess-table manners had always been disagreeable to her. What did she care for jokes about the major, or scandal concerning the Scotch surgeon of the regiment? If they drank their wine out of black bottles or crystal, what did it matter to her? Their stories of the stable, the parade, and the last run with the hounds, were perfectly odious to her; besides, she could not bear their impertinent mustachios and filthy habit of smoking cigars.

They were always wild vulgar young men at the best; but *now*, oh! their presence to her delicate soul was horror! How could she bear to look on them after what had occurred? She thought of the best of husbands ruthlessly cut down by their cruel heavy cavalry sabres; the kind friend, the generous landlord, the spotless justice of peace, in whose family differences these rude cornets of dragoons had dared to interfere, whose venerable blue hairs they had dragged down with sorrow to the grave!

She put up a most splendid monument to her departed lord over the family vault of the Bluebeards. The rector, Doctor Sly, who had been Mr. Bluebeard's tutor at college, wrote an epitaph in the most pompous yet pathetic Latin:—‘*Siste, viator! mœrens conjux, heu! quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse;*’ in a word, everything that is usually said in epitaphs. A bust of the departed saint, with Virtue mourning over it, stood over the epitaph, surrounded by medallions of his wives, and one of these medallions had as yet no name in it, nor (the epitaph said) could the widow ever be consoled until her own name was inscribed there.

'For then I shall be with him. In cœlo quies,' she would say, throwing up her fine eyes to heaven, and quoting the enormous words of the hatchment which was put up in the church and over Bluebeard's hall, where the butler, the housekeeper, the footman, the housemaid, and scullions were all in the profoundest mourning. The keeper went out to shoot birds in a crape band; nay, the very scarecrows in the orchard and fruit-garden were ordered to be dressed in black.

Sister Anne was the only person who refused to wear black. Mrs. Bluebeard would have parted with her, but she had no other female relative. Her father, it may be remembered by readers of the former part of her Memoirs, had married again; and the mother-in-law and Mrs. Bluebeard, as usual, hated each other furiously. Mrs. Shacabac had come to the hall on a visit of condolence; but the widow was so rude to her on the second day of the visit that the stepmother quitted the house in a fury. As for the Bluebeards, of course *they* hated the widow. Had not Mr. Bluebeard settled every shilling upon her? and, having no children by his former marriage, her property, as I leave you to fancy, was pretty handsome. So sister Anne was the only female relative whom Mrs. Bluebeard would keep near her, and, as we all know, a woman *must* have a female relative under any circumstances of pain, or pleasure, or profit—when she is married, or when she is in a delicate situation. But let us continue our story.

'I will never wear mourning for that odious wretch, sister!' Anne would cry.

'I will trouble you, Miss Anne, not to use such words in my presence regarding the best of husbands, or to quit the room at once!' the widow would answer.

'I'm sure it's no great pleasure to sit in it. I wonder you don't make use of the closet, sister, where the *other* Mrs. Bluebeards are.'

'Impertinence! they were all embalmed by Monsieur Gannal. How dare you report the monstrous calumnies regarding the best of men? Take down the family Bible and read what my blessed saint says of his wives—read it written in his own hand:—

"*Friday, June 20.*—Married my beloved wife, Anna Maria Scrogginsia.

"*Saturday, August 1.*—A bereaved husband has scarcely strength to write down in this chronicle that the dearest of wives, Anna Maria Scrogginsia, expired this day of sore throat."

'There! can anything be more convincing than that? Read again:—

“*Tuesday, Sept. 1.*—This day I led to the hymeneal altar my soul’s blessing, Louisa Matilda Hopkinson. May this angel supply the place of her I have lost!

“*Wednesday, October 5.*—Oh, heavens! pity the distraction of a wretch who is obliged to record the ruin of his dearest hopes and affections! This day my adored Louisa Matilda Hopkinson gave up the ghost! A complaint of the head and shoulders was the sudden cause of the event which has rendered the unhappy subscriber the most miserable of men.

BLUEBEARD.”

‘Every one of the women are calendared in this delightful, this pathetic, this truly virtuous and tender way; and can you suppose that a man who wrote such sentiments could be a *murderer*, miss?’

‘Do you mean to say that he did not *kill* them, then?’ said Anne.

‘Gracious goodness, Anne, kill them! they died all as naturally as I hope you will. My blessed husband was an angel of goodness and kindness to them. Was it *his* fault that the doctors could not cure their maladies? No, that it wasn’t! and when they died the inconsolable husband had their bodies embalmed, in order that on this side of the grave he might never part from them.’

‘And why did he take you up in the tower, pray? and why did you send me in such a hurry to the leads? and why did he sharpen his long knife, and roar out to you to COME DOWN?’

‘Merely to punish me for my curiosity—the dear, good, kind, excellent creature!’ sobbed the widow, overpowered with affectionate recollections of her lord’s attentions to her.

‘I wish,’ said sister Anne sulkily, ‘that I had not been in such a hurry in summoning my brothers.’

‘Ah!’ screamed Mrs. Bluebeard, with a harrowing scream, ‘don’t—don’t recall that horrid fatal day, miss! If you had not misled your brothers, my poor dear darling Bluebeard would still be in life, still—still the soul’s joy of his bereaved Fatima!’

Whether it is that all wives adore husbands when the latter are no more, or whether it is that Fatima’s version of the story is really the correct one, and that the common impression against Bluebeard is an odious prejudice, and that he no more murdered his wives than you and I have, remains yet to be proved, and, indeed, does not much matter for the understanding of the rest of Mrs. B.’s adventures. And though people will say that Bluebeard’s settlement of his whole fortune on his wife, in event of survivorship, was a mere act of absurd mystification, seeing that he was fully



determined to cut her head off after the honeymoon, yet the best test of his real intentions is the profound grief which the widow manifested for his death, and the fact that he left her mighty well-to-do in the world.

If any one were to leave you or me a fortune, my dear friend, would we be too anxious to rake up the how and the why? Pooh! pooh! we would take it and make no bones about it, and Mrs. Bluebeard did likewise. Her husband's family, it is true, argued the point with her, and said, 'Madam, you must perceive that Mr. Bluebeard never intended the fortune for you, as it was his fixed intention to chop off your head! it is clear that he meant to leave his money to his blood relations, therefore you ought in equity to hand it over.' But she sent them all off with a flea in their ears, as the saying is, and said, 'Your argument may be a very good one, but I will, if you please, keep the money.' And she ordered the mourning as we have before shown, and indulged in grief, and exalted everywhere the character of the deceased. If any one would but leave me a fortune, what a funeral and what a character I would give him!

Bluebeard Hall is situated, as we all very well know, in a remote country district, and, although a fine residence, is remarkably gloomy and lonely. To the widow's susceptible mind, after the death of her darling husband, the place became intolerable. The walk, the lawn, the fountain, the green glades of park over which frisked the dappled deer, all—all recalled the memory of her beloved. It was but yesterday that, as they roamed through the park in the calm summer evening, her Bluebeard pointed out to the keeper the fat buck he was to kill. 'Ah!' said the widow, with tears in her fine eyes, 'the artless stag was shot down, the haunch was cut and roasted, the jelly had been prepared from the currant-bushes in the garden that he loved, but my Bluebeard never ate of the venison! Look, Anna sweet, pass we the old oak hall; 'tis hung with trophies won by him in the chase, with pictures of the noble race of Bluebeard! Look! by the fireplace there is the gig-whip, his riding-whip, the spud with which you know he used to dig the weeds out of the terrace-walk; in that drawer are his spurs, his whistle, his visiting-cards, with his dear dear name engraven upon them! There are the bits of string that he used to cut off the parcels and keep because string was always useful; his button-hook, and there is the peg on which he used to hang his h—h—hat!'

Uncontrollable emotions, bursts of passionate tears, would follow these tender reminiscences of the widow; and the long and short of the matter was, that she was determined to give up Bluebeard

Hall and live elsewhere ; her love for the memory of the deceased, she said, rendered the place too wretched.

Of course an envious and sneering world said that she was tired of the country and wanted to marry again ; but she little heeded its taunts, and Anne, who hated her stepmother and could not live at home, was fain to accompany her sister to the town where the Bluebeards have had for many years a very large, genteel, old-fashioned house. So she went to the town-house, where they lived and quarrelled pretty much as usual ; and though Anne often threatened to leave her and go to a boarding-house, of which there were plenty in the place, yet after all to live with her sister, and drive out in the carriage with the footman and coachman in mourning, and the lozenge on the panels, with the Bluebeard and Shacabac arms quartered on it, was far more respectable, and so the lovely sisters continued to dwell together.

For a lady under Mrs. Bluebeard's circumstances, the town-house had other and peculiar advantages. Besides being an exceedingly spacious and dismal brick building, with a dismal iron railing in front, and long dismal thin windows with little panes of glass, it looked out into the churchyard where, time out of mind, between two yew-trees, one of which is cut into the form of a peacock, while the other represents a dumb-waiter—it looked into the churchyard where the monument of the late Bluebeard was placed over the family vault. It was the first thing the widow saw from her bedroom window in the morning, and 'twas sweet to watch at night from the parlour the pallid moonlight lighting up the bust of the departed, and Virtue throwing great black shadows athwart it. Polyanthes, rhododendra, ranunculuses, and other flowers with the largest names and of the most delightful odours, were planted within the little iron railing that enclosed the last resting-place of the Bluebeards ; and the beadle was instructed to half-kill any little boys who might be caught plucking these sweet testimonies of a wife's affection.

Over the sideboard in the dining-room hung a full-length of Mr. Bluebeard, by Ticklegill, R.A., in a militia uniform, frowning down upon the knives and forks and silver trays. Over the mantelpiece he was represented in a hunting costume on his favourite horse ; there was a sticking-plaster silhouette of him in the widow's bedroom, and a miniature in the drawing-room, where he was drawn in a gown of black and gold, holding a gold-tasselled trencher-cap with one hand, and with the other pointing to a diagram of *Pons Asinorum*. This likeness was taken when he was a fellow-commoner at St. John's College, Cambridge, and before the growth of that

blue beard which was the ornament of his manhood, and a part of which now formed a beautiful blue neck-chain for his bereaved wife.

Sister Anne said the town-house was even more dismal than the country-house, for there was pure air at the Hall, and it was pleasanter to look out on a park than on a churchyard, however fine the monuments might be. But the widow said she was a light-minded hussy, and persisted as usual in her lamentations and mourning. The only male whom she would admit within her doors was the parson of the parish, who read sermons to her; and, as his reverence was at least seventy years old, Anne, though she might be ever so much minded to fall in love, had no opportunity to indulge her inclination; and the townspeople, scandalous as they might be, could not find a word to say against the *liaison* of the venerable man and the heart-stricken widow.

All other company she resolutely refused. When the players were in the town, the poor manager, who came to beg her to bespeak a comedy, was thrust out of the gates by the big butler. Though there were balls, card-parties, and assemblies, Widow Bluebeard would never subscribe to one of them; and even the officers, those all-conquering heroes who make such ravages in ladies' hearts, and to whom all ladies' doors are commonly open, could never get an entry into the widow's house. Captain Whiskerfield strutted for three weeks up and down before her house, and had not the least effect upon her. Captain O'Grady (of an Irish regiment) attempted to bribe the servants, and one night actually scaled the garden-wall; but all that he got was his foot in a man-trap, not to mention being dreadfully scarified by the broken glass; and so *he* never made love any more. Finally, Captain Blackbeard, whose whiskers vied in magnitude with those of the deceased Bluebeard himself, although he attended church regularly every week—he who had not darkened the doors of a church for ten years before—even Captain Blackbeard got nothing by his piety; and the widow never once took her eyes off her book to look at him. The barracks were in despair; and Captain Whiskerfield's tailor, who had supplied him with new clothes in order to win the widow's heart, ended by clapping the Captain into gaol.

His reverence the parson highly applauded the widow's conduct to the officers; but, being himself rather of a social turn, and fond of a good dinner and a bottle, he represented to the lovely mourner that she should endeavour to divert her grief by a little respectable society, and recommended that she should from time to time entertain a few grave and sober persons whom he would present to her. As Doctor Sly had an unbounded influence over the fair mourner,

she acceded to his desires ; and accordingly he introduced to her house some of the most venerable and worthy of his acquaintance, —all married people, however, so that the widow should not take the least alarm.

It happened that the Doctor had a nephew, who was a lawyer in London, and this gentleman came dutifully in the long vacation to pay a visit to his reverend uncle. 'He is none of your roystering dashing young fellows,' said his reverence ; 'he is the delight of his mamma and sisters ; he never drinks anything stronger than tea ; he never missed church thrice a Sunday for these twenty years ; and I hope, my dear and amiable madam, that you will not object to receive this pattern of young men for the sake of your most devoted friend, his uncle.'

The widow consented to receive Mr. Sly. He was not a handsome man certainly. 'But what does that matter?' said the Doctor ; 'he is *good*, and virtue is better than all the beauty of all the dragoons in the Queen's service.'

Mr. Sly came there to dinner, and he came to tea ; and he drove out with the widow in the carriage with the lozenge on it ; and at church he handed the psalm-book ; and, in short, he paid her every attention which could be expected from so polite a young gentleman.

At this the town began to talk, as people in towns will. 'The Doctor kept all bachelors out of the widow's house,' said they, 'in order that that ugly nephew of his may have the field entirely to himself.' These speeches were of course heard by sister Anne, and the little minx was not a little glad to take advantage of them, in order to induce her sister to see some more cheerful company. The fact is, the young hussy loved a dance or a game at cards much more than a humdrum conversation over a tea-table ; and so she plied her sister day and night with hints as to the propriety of opening her house, receiving the gentry of the county, and spending her fortune.

To this point the widow at length, though with many sighs and vast unwillingness, acceded ; and she went so far as to order a very becoming half-mourning, in which all the world declared she looked charming. 'I carry,' said she, 'my blessed Bluebeard in my heart,—*that* is in the deepest mourning for him, and when the heart grieves there is no need of outward show.'

So she issued cards for a little quiet tea and supper, and several of the best families in the town and neighbourhood attended her entertainment. It was followed by another and another ; and at last Captain Blackbeard was actually introduced, though, of course, he came in plain clothes.

Doctor Sly and his nephew never could abide the Captain. 'They had heard some queer stories,' they said, 'about proceedings in barracks. Who was it that drank three bottles at a sitting? who had a mare that ran for the plate? and why was it that Dolly Coddlin left the town so suddenly?' Mr. Sly turned up the whites of his eyes as his uncle asked these questions, and sighed for the wickedness of the world. But for all that he was delighted, especially at the anger which the widow manifested when the Dolly Coddlin affair was hinted at. She was furious, and vowed she would never see the wretch again. The lawyer and his uncle were charmed. O short-sighted lawyer and parson, do you think Mrs. Bluebeard would have been so angry if she had not been jealous?—do you think she would have been jealous if she had not—had not what? She protested that she no more cared for the Captain than she did for one of her footmen; but the next time he called she would not condescend to say a word to him.

'My dearest Miss Anne,' said the Captain, as he met her in Sir Roger de Coverley (she was herself dancing with Ensign Trippet), 'what is the matter with your lovely sister?'

'Dolly Coddlin is the matter,' said Miss Anne. 'Mr. Sly has told all;' and she was down the middle in a twinkling.

The Captain blushed so at this monstrous insinuation that any one could see how incorrect it was. He made innumerable blunders in the dance, and was all the time casting such ferocious glances at Mr. Sly (who did not dance, but sate by the widow and ate ices), that his partner thought he was mad, and that Mr. Sly became very uneasy.

When the dance was over, he came to pay his respects to the widow, and, in so doing, somehow trod so violently on Mr. Sly's foot that that gentleman screamed with pain, and presently went home. But though he was gone the widow was not a whit more gracious to Captain Blackbeard. She requested Mr. Trippet to order her carriage that night, and went home without uttering one single word to Captain Blackbeard.

The next morning, and with a face of preternatural longitude, the Reverend Doctor Sly paid a visit to the widow. 'The wickedness and bloodthirstiness of the world,' said he, 'increase every day. Oh, my dear madam, what monsters do we meet in it—what wretches, what assassins, are allowed to go abroad! Would you believe it, that this morning, as my nephew was taking his peaceful morning meal, one of the ruffians from the barracks presented himself with a challenge from Captain Blackbeard?'

'Is he hurt?' screamed the widow.

'No, my dear friend, my dear Frederick is not hurt. And oh,



what a joy it will be to him to think you have that tender solicitude for his welfare !'

'You know I have always had the highest respect for him,' said the widow ; who, when she screamed, was in truth thinking of somebody else. But the Doctor did not choose to interpret her thoughts in that way, and gave all the benefit of them to his nephew.

'That anxiety, dearest madam, which you express for him emboldens me, encourages me, authorises me, to press a point on you which I am sure must have entered your thoughts ere now. The dear youth in whom you have shown such an interest lives but for you ! Yes, fair lady, start not at hearing that his sole affections are yours ; and with what pride shall I carry to him back the news that he is not indifferent to you !'

'Are they going to fight ?' continued the lady, in a breathless state of alarm. 'For Heaven's sake, dearest Doctor, prevent the horrid horrid meeting. Send for a magistrate's warrant ; do anything ; but do not suffer those misguided young men to cut each other's throats !'

'Fairest lady, I fly !' said the Doctor, and went back to lunch quite delighted with the evident partiality Mrs. Bluebeard showed for his nephew. And Mrs. Bluebeard, not content with exhorting him to prevent the duel, rushed to Mr. Pound, the magistrate, informed him of the facts, got out warrants against both Mr. Sly and the Captain, and would have put them into execution ; but it was discovered that the former gentleman had abruptly left town, so that the constable could not lay hold of him.

It somehow, however, came to be generally known that the widow Bluebeard had declared herself in favour of Mr. Sly, the lawyer ; that she had fainted when told her lover was about to fight a duel ; finally, that she had accepted him, and would marry him as soon as the quarrel between him and the Captain was settled. Doctor Sly, when applied to, hummed and ha'd, and would give no direct answer ; but he denied nothing, and looked so knowing, that all the world was certain of the fact ; and the county paper next week stated :—

'We understand that the lovely and wealthy Mrs. Bl—b—rd is about once more to enter the bands of wedlock with our distinguished townsman, Frederick S—y, Esquire, of the Middle Temple, London. The learned gentleman left town in consequence of a dispute with a gallant son of Mars which was likely to have led to warlike results, had not a magistrate's warrant intervened, when the Captain was bound over to keep the peace.'

In fact, as soon as the Captain was so bound over, Mr. Sly came back, stating that he had quitted the town not to avoid a duel,—far from it, but to keep out of the way of the magistrates, and give the Captain every facility. *He* had taken out no warrant; *he* had been perfectly ready to meet the Captain; if others had been more prudent, it was not his fault. So he held up his head, and cocked his hat with the most determined air; and all the lawyers' clerks in the place were quite proud of their hero.

As for Captain Blackbeard, his rage and indignation may be imagined; a wife robbed from him, his honour put in question by an odious, lanky, squinting lawyer! He fell ill of a fever incontinently; and the surgeon was obliged to take a quantity of blood from him, ten times the amount of which he swore he would have out of the veins of the atrocious Sly.

The announcement in the *Mercury*, however, filled the widow with almost equal indignation. 'The widow of the gallant Bluebeard,' she said, 'marry an odious wretch who lives in dingy chambers in the Middle Temple! Send for Doctor Sly.' The Doctor came; she rated him soundly, asked him how he dared set abroad such calumnies concerning her; ordered him to send his nephew back to London at once; and, as he valued her esteem, as he valued the next presentation to a fat living which lay in her gift, to contradict everywhere, and in the fullest terms, the wicked report concerning her.

'My dearest madam,' said the Doctor, pulling his longest face, 'you shall be obeyed. The poor lad shall be acquainted with the fatal change in your sentiments!'

'Change in my sentiments, Doctor Sly!'

'With the destruction of his hopes, rather let me say; and Heaven grant that the dear boy have strength to bear up against the misfortune which comes so suddenly upon him!'

The next day sister Anne came with a face full of care to Mrs. Bluebeard. 'Oh, that unhappy lover of yours!' said she.

'Is the Captain unwell?' exclaimed the widow.

'No, it is the other,' answered sister Anne. 'Poor, poor Mr. Sly! He made a will leaving you all, except five pounds a year to his laundress: he made his will, locked his door, took heart-rending leave of his uncle at night, and this morning was found hanging at his bedpost when Sambo, the black servant, took him up his water to shave. "Let me be buried," he said, "with the pincushion she gave me and the locket containing her hair." *Did* you give him a pincushion, sister? *did* you give him a locket with your hair?'

'It was only silver-gilt!' sobbed the widow; 'and now, oh,

heavens! I have killed him!' The heartrending nature of her sobs may be imagined; but they were abruptly interrupted by her sister.

'Killed him?—no such thing! Sambo cut him down when he was as black in the face as the honest negro himself. He came down to breakfast, and I leave you to fancy what a touching meeting took place between the nephew and uncle.'

'So much love!' thought the widow. 'What a pity he squints so! If he would but get his eyes put straight, I might perhaps——' She did not finish the sentence: ladies often leave this sort of sentence in a sweet confusion.

But hearing some news regarding Captain Blackbeard, whose illness and blood-letting were described to her most pathetically, as well as accurately, by the Scotch surgeon of the regiment, her feelings of compassion towards the lawyer cooled somewhat; and when Doctor Sly called to know if she would condescend to meet the unhappy youth, she said, in rather a *distrain* manner, that she wished him every happiness; that she had the highest regard and respect for him; that she besought him not to think any more of committing the dreadful crime which would have made her unhappy for ever; *but* that she thought, for the sake of both parties, they had better not meet until Mr. Sly's feelings had grown somewhat more calm.

'Poor fellow! poor fellow!' said the Doctor, 'may he be enabled to bear his frightful calamity! I have taken away his razors from him, and Sambo, my man, never lets him out of his sight.'

The next day Mrs. Bluebeard thought of sending a friendly message to Doctor Sly's, asking for news of the health of his nephew; but, as she was giving her orders on that subject to John Thomas, the footman, it happened that the Captain arrived, and so Thomas was sent downstairs again. And the Captain looked so delightfully interesting with his arm in a sling, and his beautiful black whiskers curling round a face which was paler than usual, that at the end of two hours the widow forgot the message altogether, and indeed, I believe, asked the Captain whether he would not stop and dine. Ensign Trippet came, too, and the party was very pleasant; and the military gentlemen laughed hugely at the idea of the lawyer having been cut off the bedpost by the black servant, and were so witty on the subject, that the widow ended by half believing that the bedpost and hanging scheme on the part of Mr. Sly was only a feint—a trick to win her heart. Though this, to be sure, was not agreed to by the lady without a pang, for *entre nous*, to hang oneself for a lady is

no small compliment to her attractions, and, perhaps, Mrs. Bluebeard was rather disappointed at the notion that the hanging was not a *bona fide* strangulation.

However, presently her nerves were excited again; and she was consoled or horrified, as the case may be (the reader must settle the point according to his ideas and knowledge of woman-kind)—she was at any rate dreadfully excited by the receipt of a billet in the well-known clerk-like hand of Mr. Sly. It ran thus:—

‘I saw you through your dining-room windows. You were hobnobbing with Captain Blackbeard. You looked rosy and well. You smiled. You drank off the champagne at a single draught.

‘I can bear it no more. Live on, smile on, and be happy. My ghost shall repine, perhaps, at your happiness with another—but in life I should go mad were I to witness it.

‘It is best that I should be gone.

‘When you receive this, tell my uncle to drag the fish-pond at the end of Bachelor’s Acre. His black servant Sambo accompanies me, it is true. But Sambo shall perish with me should his obstinacy venture to restrain me from my purpose. I know the poor fellow’s honesty well, but I also know my own despair.

‘Sambo will leave a wife and seven children. Be kind to those orphan mulattoes for the sake of  
FREDERICK.’

The widow gave a dreadful shriek, and interrupted the two Captains, who were each just in the act of swallowing a bumper of claret. ‘Fly—fly—save him,’ she screamed; ‘save him, monsters, ere it is too late! Drowned!—Frederick!—Bachelor’s Wa——’ Syncope took place, and the rest of the sentence was interrupted.

Deucedly disappointed at being obliged to give up their wine, the two heroes seized their cocked-hats, and went towards the spot which the widow in her wild exclamations of despair had sufficiently designated.

Trippet was for running to the fish-pond at the rate of ten miles an hour. ‘Take it easy, my good fellow,’ said Captain Blackbeard; ‘running is unwholesome after dinner. And if that squinting scoundrel of a lawyer *does* drown himself, I shan’t sleep any the worse.’ So the two gentlemen walked very leisurely on towards the Bachelor’s Walk; and, indeed, seeing on their way thither Major Macabaw looking out of the window at his quarters and smoking a cigar, they went upstairs to consult the Major, as also a bottle of Schiedam he had.

‘They come not!’ said the widow, when restored to herself. ‘Oh, heavens! grant that Frederick is safe! Sister Anne, go up to the leads and look if anybody is coming.’ And up, accordingly,

to the garrets sister Anne mounted. 'Do you see anybody coming, sister Anne?'

'I see Doctor Drench's little boy,' said sister Anne; 'he is leaving a pill and draught at Miss Molly Grub's.'

'Dearest sister Anne, don't you see any one coming?' shouted the widow once again.

'I see a flock of dust,—no! a cloud of sheep. Pshaw! I see the London coach coming in. There are three outsides, and the guard has flung a parcel to Mrs. Jenkins's maid.'

'Distraction! Look once more, sister Anne.'

'I see a crowd—a shutter—a shutter with a man on it—a beadle—forty little boys—Gracious goodness! what *can* it be?' and downstairs tumbled sister Anne, and was looking out of the parlour-window by her sister's side, when the crowd she had perceived from the garret passed close by them.

At the head walked the beadle, slashing about at the little boys.

Two scores of these followed and surrounded

A SHUTTER carried by four men.

On the shutter lay *Frederick*! He was ghastly pale; his hair was dragged over his face; his clothes stuck tight to him on account of the wet; streams of water gurgled down the shutter sides. But he was not dead! He turned one eye round towards the window where Mrs. Bluebeard sat, and gave her a look which she never could forget.

Sambo brought up the rear of the procession. He was quite wet through; and, if anything would have put his hair out of curl, his ducking would have done so. But, as he was not a gentleman, he was allowed to walk home on foot, and, as he passed the widow's window, he gave her one dreadful glance with his goggling black eyes, and moved on pointing with his hands to the shutter.

John Thomas, the footman, was instantly despatched to Doctor Sly's to have news of the patient. There was no shilly-shallying now. He came back in half an hour to say that Mr. Frederick flung himself into Bachelor's Acre fish-pond with Sambo, had been dragged out with difficulty, had been put to bed, and had a pint of white wine whey, and was pretty comfortable. 'Thank Heaven!' said the widow, and gave Joan Thomas a seven-shilling piece, and sat down with a lightened heart to tea. 'What a heart!' said she to sister Anne. 'And, oh, what a pity it is that he squints!'

Here the two Captains arrived. They had not been to the Bachelor's Walk; they had remained at Major Macabaw's consulting the Schiedam. They had made up their minds what to say. 'Hang the fellow! he will never have the pluck to drown



himself,' said Captain Blackbeard. 'Let us argue on that, as we may safely.'

'My sweet lady,' said he, accordingly, 'we have had the pond dragged. No Mr. Sly. And the fisherman who keeps the punt assures us that he has not been there all day.'

'Audacious falsehood!' said the widow, her eyes flashing fire. 'Go, heartless man! who dares to trifle thus with the feelings of a respectable and unprotected woman. Go, sir, you're only fit for the love of a—Dolly—Coddilins!' She pronounced the *Coddilins* with a withering sarcasm that struck the Captain aghast; and sailing out of the room, she left her tea untasted, and did not wish either of the military gentlemen good-night.

But, gentles, an ye know the delicate fibre of woman's heart, ye will not in very sooth believe that such events as those we have described—such tempests of passion—fierce winds of woe—blinding lightnings of tremendous joy and tremendous grief—could pass over one frail flower and leave it all unscathed. No! Grief kills as joy doth. Doth not the scorching sun nip the rose-bud as well as the bitter wind? As Mrs. Sigourney sweetly sings—

'Ah! the heart is a soft and a delicate thing;  
Ah! the heart is a lute with a thrilling string;  
A spirit that floats on a gossamer's wing!'

Such was Fatima's heart. In a word, the preceding events had a powerful effect upon her nervous system, and she was ordered much quiet and sal-volatile by her skilful medical attendant, Doctor Glauber.

To be so ardently, passionately loved as she was, to know that Frederick had twice plunged into death from attachment to her, was to awaken in her bosom 'a thrilling string' indeed! Could she witness such attachment, and not be touched by it? She *was* touched by it—she was influenced by the virtues, by the passion, by the misfortunes of Frederick; but then he was so abominably ugly that she could not—she could not consent to become his bride!

She told Doctor Sly so. 'I respect and esteem your nephew,' said she; 'but my resolve is made. I will continue faithful to that blessed saint, whose monument is ever before my eyes' (she pointed to the churchyard as she spoke). 'Leave this poor tortured heart in quiet. It has already suffered more than most hearts could bear. I will repose under the shadow of that tomb until I am called to rest within it—to rest by the side of my Bluebeard!'

The ranunculuses, rhododendra, and polyanthuses, which orna-

mented that mausoleum, had somehow been suffered to run greatly to seed during the last few months, and it was with no slight self-accusation that she acknowledged this fact on visiting the 'garden of the grave,' as she called it; and she scolded the beadle soundly for neglecting his duty towards it. He promised obedience for the future, dug out all the weeds that were creeping round the family vault, and (having charge of the key) entered that awful place, and swept and dusted the melancholy contents of the tomb.

Next morning the widow came down to breakfast looking very pale. She had passed a bad night; she had had awful dreams; she had heard a voice call her thrice at midnight. 'Pooh! my dear; it's only nervousness,' said sceptical sister Anne.

Here John Thomas the footman entered, and said the beadle was in the hall, looking in a very strange way. He had been about the house since daybreak, and insisted on seeing Mrs. Bluebeard. 'Let him enter,' said that lady, prepared for some great mystery. The beadle came; he was pale as death; his hair was dishevelled, and his cocked-hat out of order. 'What have you to say?' said the lady, trembling.

Before beginning, he fell down on his knees.

'Yesterday,' said he, 'according to your ladyship's orders, I dug up the flower-beds of the family vault—dusted the vault and the—the coffins' (added he, trembling) 'inside. Me and John Sexton did it together, and polished up the plate quite beautiful.'

'For Heaven's sake, don't allude to it,' cried the widow, turning pale.

'Well, my lady, I locked the door, came away, and found in my hurry—for I wanted to beat two little boys what was playing at marbles on Alderman Paunch's monyment—I found, my lady, I'd forgot my cane. I couldn't get John Sexton to go back with me till this morning, and I didn't like to go alone, and so we went this morning, and what do you think I found? I found his honour's coffin turned round, and the cane broke in two. Here's the cane!'

'Ah!' screamed the widow, 'take it away—take it away!'

'Well, what does this prove,' said sister Anne, 'but that somebody moved the coffin, and broke the cane?'

'Somebody! *who's somebody?*' said the beadle, staring round about him. And all of a sudden he started back with a tremendous roar, that made the ladies scream and all the glasses on the sideboard jingle, and cried, '*That's the man!*'

He pointed to the portrait of Bluebeard which stood over the jingling glasses on the sideboard. 'That's the man I saw last night walking round the vault, as I'm a living sinner. I saw him

a-walking round and round, and when I went up to speak to him, I'm blessed if he didn't go in at the iron gate, which opened afore him like—like winking, and then in at the vault door, which I'd double-locked, my lady, and bolted inside, I'll take my oath on it !'

'Perhaps you had given him the key ?' suggested sister Anne.

'It's never been out of my pocket. Here it is,' cried the beadle, 'I'll have no more to do with it ;' and he flung down the ponderous key, amidst another scream from widow Bluebeard.

'At what hour did you see him ?' gasped she.

'At twelve o'clock, of course.'

'It must have been at that very hour,' said she, 'I heard the voice.'

'What voice ?' said Anne.

'A voice that called "Fatima ! Fatima ! Fatima !" three times as plain as ever voice did.'

'It didn't speak to me,' said the beadle ; 'it only nodded its head and wagged its head and beard.'

'W—w—was it a *bl—ue beard* ?' said the widow.

'Powder-blue, ma'am, as I've a soul to save !'

Doctor Drench was of course instantly sent for. But what are the medicaments of the apothecary in a case where the grave gives up its dead ? Doctor Sly arrived, and he offered ghostly—ah ! too ghostly—consolation. He said he believed in them. His own grandmother had appeared to his grandfather several times before he married again. He could not doubt that supernatural agencies were possible, even frequent.

'Suppose he were to appear to me alone,' ejaculated the widow, 'I should die of fright.'

The Doctor looked particularly arch. 'The best way in these cases, my dear madam,' said he—'the best way for unprotected ladies is to get a husband. I never heard of a first husband's ghost appearing to a woman and her second husband in my life. In all history there is no account of one.'

'Ah ! why should I be afraid of seeing my Bluebeard again ?' said the widow ; and the Doctor retired quite pleased, for the lady was evidently thinking of a second husband.

'The Captain would be a better protector for me certainly than Mr. Sly,' thought the lady, with a sigh ; 'but Mr. Sly will certainly kill himself, and will the Captain be a match for two ghosts ? Sly will kill himself ; but ah ! the Captain won't ;' and the widow thought with pangs of bitter mortification of Dolly Coddins. How, how should these distracting circumstances be brought to an end ?

She retired to rest that night not without a tremor—to bed, but not to sleep. At midnight a voice was heard in her room crying ‘Fatima! Fatima! Fatima!’ in awful accents. The doors banged to and fro, the bells began to ring, the maids went up and down stairs skurrying and screaming, and gave warning in a body. John Thomas, as pale as death, declared that he found Bluebeard’s yeomanry sword, that hung in the hall, drawn and on the ground; and the sticking-plaster miniature in Mr. Bluebeard’s bedroom was found turned topsy-turvy!

‘It is some trick,’ said the obstinate and incredulous sister Anne. ‘To-night I will come and sleep with you, sister;’ and the night came, and the sisters retired together.

’Twas a wild night. The wind howling without went crashing through the old trees of the old rookery round about the old church. The long bedroom windows went thump—thumping; the moon could be seen through them lighting up the graves with their ghastly shadows; the yew tree, cut into the shape of a bird looked particularly dreadful, and bent and swayed as if it would peck something off that other yew tree which was of the shape of a dumb-waiter. The bells at midnight began to ring as usual, the doors clapped, jingle—jingle down came a suit of armour in the hall, and a voice came and cried, ‘Fatima! Fatima! Fatima! look, look, look; the tomb, the tomb, the tomb!’

She looked. The vault door was open; and there in the moonlight stood Bluebeard, exactly as he was represented in the picture, in his yeomanry dress, his face frightfully pale and his great blue beard curling over his chest, as awful as Mr. Muntz’s.

Sister Anne saw the vision as well as Fatima. We shall spare the account of their terrors and screams. Strange to say, John Thomas, who slept in the attic above his mistress’s bedroom, declared he was on the watch all night and had seen nothing in the churchyard, and heard no sort of voices in the house.

And now the question came, What could the ghost want by appearing? ‘Is there anything,’ exclaimed the unhappy and perplexed Fatima, ‘that he would have me do? It is well to say “now, now, now,” and to show himself; but what is it that makes my blessed husband so uneasy in his grave?’ And all parties consulted agreed that it was a very sensible question.

John Thomas, the footman, whose excessive terror at the appearance of the ghost had procured him his mistress’s confidence, advised Mr. Screw, the butler, who communicated with Mrs. Baggs, the housekeeper, who condescended to impart her observations to Mrs. Bustle, the lady’s-maid—John Thomas, I say, decidedly advised that my lady should consult a cunning man. There was

such a man in town; he had prophesied who should marry his (John Thomas's) cousin; he had cured Farmer Horn's cattle, which were evidently bewitched; he could raise ghosts, and make them speak, and he therefore was the very person to be consulted in the present juncture.

'What nonsense is this you have been talking to the maids, John Thomas, about the conjurer who lives in—in——'

'In Hangman's Lane, ma'am, where the old gibbet used to stand,' replied John, who was bringing in the muffins. 'It's no nonsense, my Lady. Every word as that man says comes true, and he knows everything.'

'I desire you will not frighten the girls in the servants' hall with any of those silly stories,' said the widow; and the meaning of this speech may, of course, at once be guessed. It was that the widow meant to consult the conjurer that very night. Sister Anne said that she would never, under such circumstances, desert her dear Fatima. John Thomas was summoned to attend the ladies with a dark lantern, and forth they set on their perilous visit to the conjurer at his dreadful abode in Hangman's Lane.

What took place at that frightful interview has never been entirely known. But there was no disturbance in the house on the night after. The bells slept quietly, the doors did not bang in the least, twelve o'clock struck and no ghost appeared in the churchyard, and the whole family had a quiet night. The widow attributed this to a sprig of rosemary which the wizard gave her, and a horseshoe which she flung into the garden round the family vault, and which would keep *any* ghost quiet.

It happened the next day that, going to her milliner's, sister Anne met a gentleman who has been before mentioned in this story, Ensign Trippet by name; and, indeed, if the truth must be known, it somehow happened that she met the Ensign somewhere every day of the week.

'What news of the ghost, my dearest Miss Shacabac?' said he (you may guess on what terms the two young people were by the manner in which Mr. Trippet addressed the lady); 'has Bluebeard's ghost frightened your sister into any more fits, or set the bells a-ringing?'

Sister Anne, with a very grave air, told him that he must not joke on so awful a subject; that the ghost had been laid for awhile; that a cunning man had told her sister things so wonderful that *any* man must believe in them; that, among other things, he had shown to Fatima her future husband.

'Had,' said the Ensign, 'he black whiskers and a red coat?'



'No,' answered Anne, with a sigh, 'he had red whiskers and a black coat.'

'It can't be that rascal Sly!' cried the Ensign. But Anne only sighed more deeply, and would not answer yes or no. 'You may tell the poor Captain,' she said, 'there is no hope for him, and all he has left is to hang himself.'

'He shall cut the throat of Sly first, though,' replied Mr. Trippet fiercely. But Anne said things were not decided as yet. Fatima was exceedingly restive and unwilling to acquiesce in the idea of being married to Mr. Sly; she had asked for further authority. The wizard said he could bring her own husband from the grave to point out her second bridegroom, who shall be, can be, must be, no other than Frederick Sly.

'It's a trick,' said the Ensign. But Anne was too much frightened by the preceding evening's occurrences to say so. 'To-night,' she said, 'the grave will tell all.' And she left Ensign Trippet in a very solemn and affecting way.

At midnight three figures were seen to issue from widow Bluebeard's house and pass through the churchyard turnstile and so away among the graves.

'To call up a ghost is bad enough,' said the wizard; 'to make him speak is awful. I recommend you, ma'am, to beware, for such curiosity has been fatal to many. There was one Arabian necromancer of my acquaintance who tried to make a ghost speak, and was torn in pieces on the spot. There was another person who *did* hear a ghost speak certainly, but came away from the interview deaf and dumb. There was another——'

'Never mind,' says Mrs. Bluebeard, all her old curiosity aroused, 'see him and hear him I will. Haven't I seen him and heard him, too, already? When he's audible *and* visible, *then's* the time.'

'But when you heard him,' said the necromancer, 'he was invisible, and when you saw him he was inaudible; so make up your mind what you will ask him, for ghosts will stand no shilly-shallying. I knew a stuttering man who was flung down by a ghost, and——'

'I *have* made up my mind,' said Fatima, interrupting him.

'To ask him what husband you shall take,' whispered Anne.

Fatima only turned red, and sister Anne squeezed her hand; they passed into the graveyard in silence.

There was no moon; the night was pitch dark. They threaded their way through the graves, stumbling over them here and there. An owl was toowhooing from the church tower, a dog was howling

somewhere, a cock began to crow, as they will sometimes at twelve o'clock at night.

'Make haste,' said the wizard. 'Decide whether you will go on or not.'

'Let us go back, sister,' said Anne.

'I *will* go on,' said Fatima. 'I should die if I gave it up, I feel I should.'

'Here's the gate; kneel down,' said the wizard. The women knelt down.

'Will you see your first husband or your second husband?'

'I will see Bluebeard first,' said the widow; 'I shall know then whether this be a mockery, or you have the power you pretend to.'

At this the wizard uttered an incantation, so frightful and of such incomprehensible words, that it is impossible for any mortal to repeat them. And at the end of what seemed to be a versicle of his chant he called 'Bluebeard!' There was no noise but the moaning of the wind in the trees, and toowhooing of the owl in the tower.

At the end of the second verse he paused again and called 'Bluebeard!' The cock began to crow, the dog began to howl, a watchman in the town began to cry out the hour, and there came from the vault within a hollow groan, and a dreadful voice said, 'Who wants me?'

Kneeling in front of the tomb, the necromancer began the third verse: as he spoke, the former phenomena were still to be remarked. As he continued, a number of ghosts rose from their graves and advanced round the kneeling figures in a circle. As he concluded, with a loud bang the door of the vault flew open, and there in blue light stood Bluebeard in his blue uniform, waving his blue sword and flashing his blue eyes round about!

'Speak now, or you are lost,' said the necromancer to Fatima. But, for the first time in her life, she had not a word to say. Sister Anne, too, was dumb with terror. And, as the awful figure advanced towards them as they were kneeling, the sister thought all was over with them, and Fatima once more had occasion to repent her fatal curiosity.

The figure advanced, saying, in dreadful accents, 'Fatima! Fatima! Fatima! wherefore am I called from my grave?' when all of a sudden down dropped his sword, down the ghost of Bluebeard went on his knees, and, clasping his hands together, roared out, 'Mercy, mercy!' as loud as man could roar.

*Six other ghosts* stood round the kneeling group. 'Why do you call me from the tomb?' said the first; 'Who dares disturb

my grave?' said the second; 'Seize him and away with him!' cried the third. 'Murder, mercy!' still roared the ghost of Bluebeard, as the white-robed spirits advanced and caught hold of him.

'It's only Tom Trippet,' said a voice at Anne's ear.

'And your very humble servant,' said a voice well known to Mrs. Bluebeard; and they helped the ladies to rise, while the other ghosts seized Bluebeard. The necromancer took to his heels and got off; he was found to be no other than Mr. Claptrap, the manager of the theatre.

It was some time before the ghost of Bluebeard could recover from the fainting fit into which he had been plunged when seized by the opposition ghosts in white; and while they were ducking him at the pump his blue beard came off, and he was discovered to be—who do you think? Why, Mr. Sly, to be sure; and it appears that John Thomas, the footman, had lent him the uniform, and had clapped the doors, and rung the bells, and spoken down the chimney; and it was Mr. Claptrap who gave Mr. Sly the blue fire and the theatre gong, and he went to London next morning by the coach; and, as it was discovered that the story concerning Miss Coddlin was a shameful calumny, why, of course, the widow married Captain Blackbeard. Doctor Sly married them, and has always declared that he knew nothing of his nephew's doings, and wondered that he has not tried to commit suicide since his last disappointment.

Mr. and Mrs. Trippet are likewise living happily together, and this, I am given to understand, is the ultimate fate of a family in whom we were all very much interested in early life.

You will say that the story is not probable. Psha! Isn't it written in a book? and is it a whit less probable than the first part of the tale?

## THE *PARTIE FINE*.

BY LANCELOT WAGSTAFF, ESQ.

COLONEL GOLLOP's dinner in Harley Street (the Colonel is an East Indian Director, and his Mulligatawney the best out of Bengal) was just put off, much to my disappointment, for I had no other engagement; Mrs. Wagstaff was out of town with her mother at Bognor, and my clothes had been brought down to the club to dress—all to no purpose.

I was disconsolately looking over the bill of fare, and debating between Irish stew and the thirteenth cut at a leg of lamb (of which seven barristers had partaken, each with his half-pint of Marsala), when Jiggins the waiter brought me in a card, saying that the gentleman was in the hall, and wished to see me.

The card was Fitzsimons',—a worthy fellow, as I daresay my reader knows. I went out to speak to him. 'Perhaps,' thought I, 'he is going to ask me to dine.'

There was something particularly splendid in Fitz's appearance, as I saw at a glance. He had on a new blue-and-white silk neckcloth, so new that it had never been hemmed; his great gold jack-chain, as I call it, was displayed across his breast, showing off itself and a lace ruffle, a great deal too ostentatiously, as I thought. He had lemon-coloured gloves; French polished boots, with deuced high heels; his hair curled (it is red, but oils to a mahogany colour); his hat extremely on one side; and his moustache lacquered up with, I do believe, the very same varnish which he puts to his boots. I hate those varnished boots, except for moderns, and Fitz is three-and-forty if he is a day.

However, there he stood, whipping his lacquered boots with a gold-headed stick, whistling, twirling his moustache, pulling up his shirt-collar, and giving himself confoundedly dandified airs in a word, before the hall-porter and the club message-boy in brass buttons.

'Wagstaff, my boy,' says he, holding out a kid glove, in a most condescending manner, 'I have something to propose to you.'

'What is it, and what's your hour?' said I, quite playfully.

'You've guessed it at once,' answered he. 'A dinner is what I mean. Mrs. Wagstaff is out of town, and——'

Here he whispered me.

Well? Why not? After all, there may be some very good fun. If my mother-in-law heard of it she would be sure to make a row. But she is safe at Bognor (may she stay there for ever!). It is much better that I should have some agreeable society than dine alone at the club, after the seven barristers on the leg of lamb. Of course it was not to be an expensive dinner,—of course not, Fitzsimons said,—no more it was to *him*—hang him—as you shall hear.

It was agreed that the dinner-hour should be seven: the place, Durognon's in the Haymarket; and as I rather pique myself on ordering a French dinner, that matter was to be consigned to me. I walked down to Durognon's, looked at the room, and ordered the dinner for four persons,—the man asked how much champagne should be put in ice? which I considered rather a leading question, and giving a rather vague reply to this (for I determined that Fitzsimons should treat us to as much as he liked), I walked away to while away the hour before dinner.

After all, I thought, I may as well dress: the things are ready at the club, and a man is right to give himself every personal advantage, especially when he is going to dine—with LADIES. There—the secret is out. Fitz has asked me to make a fourth in a *petit dîner*, given to Madame Nelval of the French Theatre, and her friend Madame Delval. I had seen Madame Nelval from a side-box a few evenings before—and *parbleu, homo sum*; I meant no harm; Gollop's dinner was off; Mrs. Wagstaff was out of town; and I confess I was very glad to have an opportunity of meeting this fascinating actress and keeping up my French. So I dressed, and at seven o'clock walked back to Durognon's;—whither it was agreed that Fitz was to bring the ladies in his brougham;—the deuce knows how he gets the money to pay for it by the way, or to indulge in a hundred other expenses far beyond any moderate man's means.

As the St. James's clock struck seven, a gentleman—past the period of extreme youth, it is true, but exhibiting a remarkably elegant person still, in a very becoming costume, might have been seen walking by London House, and turning down Charles Street to the Haymarket. This individual, I need not say, was myself. I had done my white tie to a nicety, and could not help saying, as I gazed for a moment in the great glass in the Club drawing-



room,—‘*Corbleu*, Wagstaff, you are still as *distingué* a looking fellow as any in London.’ How women can admire that odious Fitzsimons on account of his dyed moustaches, I for one never could understand.

The dinner-table at Durognon’s made a neat and hospitable appearance; the plated candlesticks were not more coppery than such goods usually are at taverns; the works of art on the wall were of tolerable merit; the window-curtains, partially drawn, yet allowed the occupant of the room to have a glimpse of the cabstand opposite, and I seated myself close to the casement, as they say in the novels, awaiting Captain Fitzsimons’ arrival with the two ladies.

I waited for some time—the cabs on the stand disappeared from the rank, plunged rattling into the mighty vortex of London, and were replaced by other cabs. The sun, which had set somewhere behind Piccadilly, was now replaced by the lustrous moon, the gas-lamps, and the red and blue orbs that flared in the windows of the chemist opposite. Time passed on, but no Fitzsimons’ brougham made its appearance. I read the evening paper, half an hour was gone, and no company come. At last, as the opera carriages actually began to thunder down the street, ‘a hand was on my shoulder,’ as the member for Pontefract sings. I turned round suddenly from my reverie—that hand, that yellow-kid-glove-covered hand was Fitzsimons’.

‘Come along, my boy,’ says he, ‘we will go fetch the ladies—they live in Bury Street, only three minutes’ walk.’

I go to Bury Street? I be seen walking through St. James’s Square, giving any arm to any other lady in Europe but my Arabella, my wife, Mrs. Wagstaff? Suppose her uncle, the Dean, is going to dine at the Bishop’s, and should see me?—me, walking with a French lady, in three-quarters of a bonnet! I should like to know what an opinion he would have of me, and where his money in the funds would go to?

‘No,’ says I, ‘my dear Fitzsimons, a joke is a joke, and I am not more strait-laced than another; but the idea that Mr. Lancelot Wagstaff should be seen walking in St. James’s Square with a young French actress, is a *little* too absurd. It would be all over the city to-morrow, and Arabella would tear my eyes out.’

‘You shan’t walk with a French actress,’ said Fitz. ‘You shall give your arm to as respectable a woman as any in Baker Street—I pledge you my honour of this—Madame la Baronne de Saint Ménéould, the widow of a General of the Empire—connected with the first people in France. Do you mean to say that she is not equal to any of your sugar-baking family?’

I passed over Fitz's sneer regarding my family ; and as it was a Baroness, of course agreed to walk with Fitzsimons in search of the ladies.

'I thought you said Madame Delval this morning !' said I.

'Oh, the Baroness is coming too,' answered Fitzsimons, and ordered a fifth cover to be laid. We walked to Bury Street, and presently, after a great deal of chattering and clapping of doors and drawers, three ladies made their appearance in the drawing-room, and having gone through the ceremony of an introduction in an entire state of darkness, the order of march was given. I offered my arm to the Baroness de Saint Ménéhould, Fitz leading the way with the other two ladies.

We walked down Jermyn Street ; my heart thumped with some uneasiness as we crossed by the gambling-house in Waterloo Place, lest any one should see me. There is a strong gas-lamp there, and I looked for the first time at my portly companion. She was fifty-five if a day—five years older than that Fitzsimons. This eased me, but somehow it didn't please me. I can walk with a woman of five-and-fifty any day—there's my mother-in-law, my aunts, and the deuce knows how many more I could mention. But I was consoled by the Baroness presently saying, that she should, from my accent, have mistaken me for a Frenchman—a great compliment to a man who has been in Paris but once, and learned the language from a Scotch usher, never mind how many years ago, at Mr. Lord's Academy, Tooting, Surrey.

But I adore Paul de Kock's novels, and have studied them so rapturously, that no wonder I should have made a proficiency in the language. Indeed, Arabella has often expressed herself quite jealous as I lay on the sofa of an evening, laughing my waistcoat-strings off, over his delightful pages. (The dear creature is not herself very familiar with the language, and sings *Fluve dew Tage, Partong pour Syrie*, etc., with the most confirmed Clapham accent.) I say she has often confessed herself to be jealous of the effect produced on my mind by this dear, delightful, wicked, odious, fascinating writer, whose pictures of French society are so admirably ludicrous. It was through Paul de Kock that I longed to know something about Parisian life, and those charming *sémillantes, frétilantes, pétillantes*, grisettes, whose manners he describes. 'It's Paul de Kock in London, by Jove,' said I to myself, when Fitz proposed the little dinner to me ; 'I shall see all their ways and their fun.' And *that* was the reason why, as Mrs. Wagstaff was out of town, I accepted the invitation so cordially.

Well, we arrived at Durognon's at a quarter-past eight, we five,

and were ushered at length into the dining-room, where the ladies flung off their cloaks and bonnets, and I had an opportunity of seeing their faces completely.

Madame Nelval's was as charming a face as I ever looked upon; her hair parted meekly over the forehead, which was rather low; the eyes and eyebrows beautiful; the nose such as Grecian sculptor scarce ever chipped out of Parian stone; the mouth small, and when innocently smiling, displaying the loveliest pearly teeth, and calling out two charming attendant dimples on each fresh cheek; the ear a perfect little gem of an ear. (I adore ears—unadorned ears without any hideous ornaments dangling from them—pagodas, chandeliers, bunches of grapes, and similar monstrosities, such as ladies will hang from them—*entr' autres*, my own wife, Mrs. W., who has got a pair of earrings her uncle the Dean gave her, that really are as big as boot-jacks, almost!) She was habited in a neat close-fitting dress of Parisian tartan silk, which showed off to advantage a figure that was perfect, and a waist that was ridiculously small. A more charming, candid, distinguished head it was impossible to see.

Madame Delval was a modest, clever, pleasing person, neatly attired in a striped something—I don't know the proper phrase; and Madame la Baronne was in a dress which I should decidedly call gingham.

When we sat down to the *Potage Printanière*, and I helped the Baroness naturally first, addressing her respectfully by her title, the other two ladies began to laugh, and that brute Fitzsimons roared as if he was insane. 'La Baronne de Saint Ménéhould!' cried out little Madame Nelval; '*O par exemple! c'est maman, mon cher monsieur!*'

On which (though I was deucedly nettled, I must confess) I said, that to be the mother of Madame Nelval was the proudest title any lady could have, and so sneaked out of my mortification, with this, I flatter myself, not inelegant compliment. The ladies, one and all, declared that I spoke French like a Parisian; and so I ordered in the champagne; and very good Durognon's Sillery is, too.

Both the young ladies declared they detested it, but Madame Nelval the elder honestly owned that she liked it; and indeed I could not but remark that, in our favour doubtless, the two younger dames forgot their prejudices, and that their glasses were no sooner filled than they were empty.

Ah, how charming it was to see the shuddering, timid, nervous way in which the lovely Nelval, junior (let me call her once by her Christian name of Virginie), turned away her little shrinking

head as the waiter opened the bottles, and they went off with their natural exhilarating pop and fiz. At the opening of the first bottle, she flew into a corner; at the opening of the second, she ran to her mother's arms (*hinnuleo similis quærenti pavidam montibus aviis matrem*, as we used to say at Tooting), sweet sensibility! charming, timorous grace! but she took the liquor very kindly when it was opened, saying, as she turned up her fine eyes to Heaven, '*Il n'y a rien qui m'agace les nerfs comme cela!*' *Agacer les nerfs!* What a delicate expression. The good old lady told her to be calm, and made light of her terror.

But though I piqued myself on ordering the dinner, the little coquette soon set me down. She asked for the most wonderful things: for instance, she would have a salad of dandelion—the waiter was packed off to Covent Garden to seek for it. When the fish came, she turned to the waiter and said, '*Comment? vous n'avez point de moules?*' with the most natural air in the world, as if mussels were always served at Parisian dinners, which I suppose is the case. And then, at dessert, what must she remark but the absence of asparagus, which, I must confess, I had not ordered!

'What,' she said, turning round to my companion, 'are there no asparagus, monsieur? No asparagus! *ah, monsieur! c'est ma vie, mon bonheur que les asperges! J'en suis folle—des asperges. Je les adore—les asperges. Je ne mange que cela,—il me les faut, Monsieur Fitzsimons. Vite, garçon! des asperges—des asperges à l'huile, entendez-vous?*'

We were both very much alarmed by this manifest excitement of Virginie's nerves; and the asparagus was sent for. O woman! you are some of you like the animals of the field in so far as this, that you do not know your power. Those who do can work wonders over us. No man can resist them. We two were as timid, wretched, and trembling, until the asparagus came, as any mortal could be. It seemed as if we had committed a crime in not ordering the asparagus that Virginie adored. If she had proposed a bit of melted pearls, I think Fitz was the man to send off to Storr and Mortimer's, and have the materials bought. They (I don't mean the pearls, but the vegetables) came in about half an hour, and she ate them cold, as she said, with oil and vinegar; but the half-hour's pause was a very painful one, and we vainly endeavoured to fill the odious vacuum with champagne. All the while Fitzsimons, though he drank and kept nervously helping his neighbours right and left, was quite silent and frightened. I know which will be the better horse (as the phrase is) if *he's* ever married. I was of course collected, and kept putting in my jokes

as usual, but I cannot help saying that I wished myself out of the premises, dreading to think what else Madame Virginie might ask for, and saying inwardly, 'What would my poor Arabella say if she knew her scoundrel of a Lancelot was in such company?'

Well—it may have been the champagne, or it may have been the asparagus,—though I never, I confess, remarked such a quality in the vegetable,—it may, I say, have been the asparagus which created—what do you think?—a reconciliation between Virginie and Héloïse—the Madame Delval before mentioned. This was a delicate matter, but it appeared the ladies had had a difference in the morning about a ribbon, a *fichu*, or some such matter doubtless, and they had not spoken all dinner-time.

But after a bottle of sherry, four of Sillery (which we all took fairly, no flinching, no heel-taps, glass and glass about), after coffee and curaçoa, and after the asparagus, a reconciliation took place. Héloïse looked at Virginie, Virginie looked at Héloïse, the latter rose from her chair, tottered towards her friend, and they were in each other's arms in a minute. Old Madame Nelval looked quite pleased at the scene, and said, smiling, to us, '*Elle a si bon cœur, ma fille!*' Oh, those mothers! they are all the same. Not that she was wrong in this instance. The two young ladies embraced with the warmest cordiality, the quarrel about the ribbon was forgotten, the two young hearts were united once more; and though that selfish brute Fitzsimons, who has no more heart than a bed-post, twiddled his eternal moustache, and yawned over the scene, I confess I was touched by this little outbreak of feeling, and this glimpse into the history of the hearts of the young persons; and drank a glass of Curaçoa to old Madame Nelval with a great deal of pleasure.

But, oh! fancy our terror, when all of a sudden Héloïse, weeping on her friend's neck, began to laugh and to cry, and burst out shrieking into a fit of hysterics! When women begin hysterics a tremor seizes me—I become mad myself—I have had my wife and mother-in-law in hysterics on the same rug, and I know what it is—the very sound of the whoo-oo-oo drives me wild. I have heard it imitated in theatres, and have rushed out in a frenzy. 'Water! water!' gasped Virginie (we had somehow not had any all dinner-time). I tumbled out of the room, upsetting three waiters who were huddled at the door (and be hanged to them): 'Water,' roared I, rushing downstairs, upsetting boots, and alarmed chambermaids came panting in with a jug.

'What will they think of us?' thought I, trembling with emotion,—'they will think we have murdered the poor young lady, and yet on my honour and conscience!—Oh, why did I



come?—what *would* Arabella say if she knew?’ I thought of the police coming in, of paragraphs in the paper beginning, ‘Two ruffians of gentlemanly exterior were brought before Mr. Jardine,’ etc., it was too horrible,—if I had had my hat I would have taken a cab off the stand, and driven down to my wife at Bognor that minute; but I hadn’t, so I went up to fetch it.

Héloise was lying on the sofa now, a little calmer; Madame Nelval and the chambermaid were being kind to her; as for that brute, Fitzsimons, he was standing in one of the windows, his legs asunder, his two fists thrust into the tail pockets of his brass-buttoned coat, whistling ‘*Suoni la Tromba*,’ the picture of heartless, shameless indifference.

As soon as the maid was gone and I was come in, Madame Virginie must of course begin hysterics too—they always do, these women. She turned towards me with an appealing look (she had been particularly attentive to me at dinner, much more than to Fitzsimons, whom she *boudé’d* the whole time)—she gave me an appealing look, and struck up, too.

I couldn’t bear it. I flung myself down on a chair, and beginning to bang my forehead, gasped out, ‘Oh Heavens! a cab, a cab!’

‘We’ll have a coach. Go back with them,’ said Fitz, coming swaggering up.

‘Go back with them?’ said I: ‘I’ll never see them again as long as I live.’

No more I *would* go back with them.

The carriage was called (the hysterics ceased the very moment Fitz flung open the window and the cab-stand opposite could hear)—and the ladies went out. In vain good old Madame Nelval looked as if she expected my arm. In vain Virginie cast her appealing look. I returned it them with the most stony indifference, and falling back upon my chair, thought of my poor Arabella.

The coach drove off. I felt easier as the rattle of the departing wheels died away in the night, and I got up to go. ‘How glad I am it’s over!’ thought I on the stair; ‘if ever I go to a *partie fine* again, may I——’

‘I beg your parding, sir,’ said the waiter, touching my elbow just as I was at the hotel door.

‘What is it?’ says I.

‘The bill, sir,’ says he with a grin.

‘The bill, sir!’ I exclaimed; ‘why, it’s Captain Fitzsimons’ dinner!’

'I beg your parding, sir. You ordered it,' answered the man.

'But, good Heavens! you know Captain Fitzsimons?'

'We do, sir, precious well, too. The capting owes master two 'undred pound,' answered the wretched official.

No. 24. To ANATOLE DUROGNON.

5 Dinners . . . . .	£1 15 0
Sherry . . . . .	0 6 0
Sillery Champagne (4 bottles) . . . . .	2 0 0
Asparagus . . . . .	0 5 0
Coffee and Liqueurs . . . . .	0 7 6
Waxlights and Apartment . . . . .	0 5 0
	<hr/>
	£4 18 6

And I must say that the bill, considered as a bill, was moderate, but I had better have dined off that Irish stew at the Club.

ARABELLA ;  
OR, THE MORAL OF 'THE *PARTIE FINE*.'

WHEN the news came to Wagstaff that he had made a public appearance in the *New Monthly Magazine*, he affected to be in great wrath that his peccadilloes should have been laid bare to the whole nation ; and was for sacrificing the individual who had held him up to ridicule. Luckily that person was out of town for some days, so his anger had time to cool if it was real ; but the truth must be told, that Lancelot Wagstaff was quite delighted at being shown up for a *séducteur*, and has ordered some new waistcoats, and affects to talk very big about the French play, and has been growing a tuft to his chin ever since. Mrs. Wagstaff still continues at Bognor. Poor soul ! *She* will never know whose was the portrait which figured last month in this Miscellany under the pseudonym ; it is only the coincidence of the new waistcoats and the sudden growth of that tuft that can by any possibility betray him.

Some critics have hinted that the scene described was immoral. So it was, there's not a doubt of it ; but so is a great deal of life immoral ; so are many of Hogarth's pictures immoral—if you don't choose to see their moral tendency ; nor, indeed, are critics to be very much blamed for not perceiving the moral of the brief tract called *The Partie Fine*, seeing, as it were, that it was not yet in sight. No ; it was purposely kept back, as a surprise for the June number of the Magazine. This is going to be the moral paper ; and I hope to goodness that Mr. Colburn's editor will not refuse it, or I shall be set down, in spite of myself, as a writer of a questionable tendency. I solemnly demand the insertion of this paper, in order to set a well-meaning man right with a public he respects. Yes, ladies, you yourselves, if you peruse these few, these very few pages, will say, 'Well, although he shocked us, the man *is* a moral man after all.' He is, indeed he is. Don't believe the critics who say the contrary.

The former history described to you the conduct of Wagstaff abroad. Ah, ladies! you little knew that it was preparatory to showing the monster up when *at home*. You would not have understood the wretch, had you not received this previous insight into his character. If *this* be not immorality, I know not what is.

Those people who at the club and elsewhere are acquainted with Mr. W., declare he is the most generous and agreeable creature that ever turned out of the city. He arrives, his honest face beaming with good-humour. He has a good word for everybody, and every man has a good word for him. Some Bachelor says, 'Wag., my boy, there is a whitebait dinner at Greenwich: will you be one?' He hesitates. 'I promised Mrs. Wagstaff to be home to dinner,' says he; and when he says that, you may be sure he will go. If you propose to him a game of billiards in the afternoon, he will play till dinner, and make the most ludicrous jokes about his poor wife waiting till his return. If you ask him to smoke cigars, he will do so till morning, and goes home with a story to Mrs. W. which the poor soul receives with a desperate credulity. Once she used to sit up for him; but to have continued that practice would have killed her. She goes to bed now, and Wagstaff reels in when he likes.

He is not ill-humoured. Far from it. He never says an unkind word to the children, or to the cook, or to the boy who blacks his boots, or to his wife. She wishes he would. He comes down exactly three minutes before office time. He has his tea and his newspaper in bed. His eldest daughter brings the paper in, and his poor wife appears with the tea. He has a kind word for both, and scrubs the little girl's fresh cheek with his bristly beard, and laughs at the joke, and professes a prodigious interest in her lessons, and in knowing whether Miss Wiggles, the governess, is satisfied with her; and before she finishes her answer, he is deep in the folios of *The Times*, and does not care one farthing piece what the little girl says. He has promised to take the child to Astley's any time these four years. She could hardly speak when he promised it. She is a fine tall lass, and can read and write now; and though it was so long ago, has never forgotten the promise about Astley's.

When he is away from home, Wagstaff talks about his family with great affection. In the long, long days when he is away, their mother, God help her! is telling them what a good man their papa is—how kind and generous—and how busy he is—what a pity! he is obliged to work so hard and stay away from home! Poor creature, poor creature! Sure Heaven will pardon her these lies if any lies are pardonable. Whenever he says he

will walk with her, Arabella dresses herself in the gown he likes, and puts on her pink bonnet, and is ready to the very minute, you may be sure. How often is it that *he* is ready at the minute? How many scores and scores of times has he left the heart-sick girl?—not forgetting her in the least, but engaged elsewhere with a game of billiards, or a jolly friend and a cigar—and perhaps wishing rather to be at home all the time—but he is *so* good-natured, such a capital fellow! Whenever he keeps his appointment—Heaven help us! she brightens up as if it were Paradise coming to her. She looks with a triumphant air at the servant who opens the door, and round about at the neighbours' windows as if she would have all the world know that she is walking with her husband. Every now and then as she walks (it is but twice and thrice in a year, for Wagstaff has his business on week-days, and never gets up till one on a Sunday),—every now and then as she walks with him, the delighted creature gives a skip, and squeezes his arm, and looks up in his face, she is so happy. And so is he, too, for he is as good-natured a fellow as ever breathed—and he resolves to take her out the very next Sunday—only he doesn't. Every one of these walk-days are noted down in the poor soul's Calendar of Home as saint's-days. She talks of them quite fondly; and there is not one of her female friends, whom she won't visit for weeks after, and to whom she will not be sure to find some pretext for recounting the wonderful walk.

*Mon dieu*, ladies—all the time I was describing that affair at Durognon's, those odious Frenchwomen, and their chatter, and their ogling, and their champagne, I was thinking of Arabella far away in the distance and alone—I declare, upon my honour, she was never out of my thoughts for a single minute. *She* was the moral of *The Partie Fine*—the simple, white-robed, spotless, meek-eyed angel of a wife—thinking about her husband,—and he among the tawdry good-for-nothings, yonder! Fizz! there goes the first champagne cork, Mr. Wagstaff is making a tender speech to Madame Virginie.

At that moment Arabella is upstairs in the nursery, where the same moon is shining in, and putting her youngest boy to bed. Bang! there goes the second cork. Virginie screams—Fitzsimons roars with laughter—Wagstaff hobnobs with the old lady, who gives a wink and a nod. They are taking away the fish and putting down the *entrées*.

At that moment Arabella has her second child between her knees (the little one is asleep with its thumb in its mouth, and the elder even is beginning to rub her eyes over her favourite fairy tale, though she has read it many scores of times). Arabella



has the child between her knees, and just as Wag is clinking his glass with the old lady in London, his wife at Bognor says something to the child, who says after her, '*Dod bless my dear papa*': and presently he is in bed, too, and sleeps as soundly as his little sister.

And so it is that these pure blessings are sent—yearning after that fellow over his cups. Suppose they reach him? Why, the spotless things must blush and go out again from the company in which they find him. The drinking goes on, the jokes and fun get faster and faster. Arabella has by this time seen the eldest child asleep in her crib, and is looking out at the moon in silence as the children breathe round her a soft chorus of slumber. Her mother is downstairs alone, reading *Blair's Sermons*,—a high-shouldered, hook-nosed, lean, moral woman. She wonders her daughter don't come down to tea—there is her cup quite cold, with the cream stagnant on the surface, and her work-basket by its side, with a pair of man's slippers nearly done, and one lazy scrawl from her husband, four lines only, and ten days old. But Arabella keeps away, thinking, thinking, and preferring to be alone. The girl has a sweet, soft heart, and little sympathy with the mother's coarse, rigid, strong-minded nature. The only time they quarrel is when the old lady calls her son-in-law a brute: *then* the young one fires up and defends her own like a little Amazon.

What is this secret of love? How does it spring? How is it that no neglect can kill it? Its truth, its origin, and endurance are alike utterly absurd and unreasonable. What secret power was it that made this delicate-minded young creature; who had been bred up upon the purest doctrines of the sainted Mrs. Chapone; who had never thought about love; who, simple soul, had been utterly absorbed in her little daily duties, her pianoforte practice, her French lesson, her use-of-the-globes, her canary bird, and her Mangnall's questions,—what, I say, is it that makes this delicate girl all of a sudden expand into a passion of love for a young sugar-baker simply because she meets him three times riding on a grey mare on Clapham Common, and afterwards (the sly rogue!) on half-a-dozen occasions at her aunt's at tea? What is it that makes her feel that that young sugar-baker is the fatal man with whom her existence is bound up; go through fire and water to marry him; love him in spite of neglect and indifference; adore him so absurdly that a half-hour's kindness from him more than balances a month's brutality! O, mystery of woman's heart! I declare all this lies in the moral of *The Partie Fine*.

Wagstaff, so splendid with his dinners and so generous on him-

self, is not so generous at home. He pays the bills with only a few oaths ; but somehow he leaves his wife without money. He will give it to anybody rather than to her ; a fact of which he himself is, very likely, unaware at this moment, or of the timidity of his wife in asking for it. In order to avoid this asking, the poor girl goes through unheard-of economies, and performs the most curious tricks of avarice. She dresses herself for nothing, and she dresses her children out of her own frocks. Certain dimities, caps, pinafores, and other fallals have gone through the family ; and Arabella, though she sees ever such a pretty thing in a shop-window, will pass on with a sigh ; whereas her Lancelot is a perfect devourer of waistcoats, and never sets eyes on a flaring velvet that strikes his fancy but you will be sure to behold him the next week staggering about in the garment in Pall Mall. Women are ever practising these petty denials, about which the Lords of Creation never think.

I will tell you what I once saw Arabella doing. She is a woman of very high breeding, and no inconsiderable share of family pride ; well, one day, on going to Wagstaff's house, who had invited a party of us to Blackwall, about a bet he had lost, I was, in the master's absence, ushered into the drawing-room, which is furnished very fine, and there sat the lady of the house at her work-table, with her child prattling at her knee.

I could not understand what made Mrs. Wagstaff blush so—look so entirely guilty of something or other—fidget, answer *à travers*, and receive an old friend in this strange and inhospitable way.

She, the descendant of the Smiths of Smithfield, of the Browns of Brown Hall, the proud daughter of the aristocracy, *was making a pair of trousers for her eldest son.*

She huddled them away hastily under a pillow,—but, bah ! we have keen eyes—and from under that pillow the buttons peeped out, and with those buttons the secret—they were white ducks—Wagstaff's white ducks—his wife was making them into white ducklings for little Fred.

The sight affected me. I should like to have cried, only it is unmanly ; and to cry about a pair of little breeches !—I should like to have seized hold of Mrs. Wagstaff and hugged her to my heart ; but she would have screamed, and rung for John to show me downstairs ; so I disguised my feelings by treading on the tail of her spaniel dog, whose squealing caused a diversion.

But I shall never forget those breeches. What ! Wagstaff is flaunting in a coat of Nugee's, and his son has that sweet, humble tailor. Wagstaff is preparing for Blackwall, and here is his wife

plying her gentle needle. Wagstaff feasts off plate and frothing wine ; and Arabella sits down to cold mutton in the nursery, with her little ones ranged about her. Wagstaff enjoys, Arabella suffers. He flings about his gold : she tries to stave off evil days by little savings of meek pence.

Wagstaff sins and she forgives, and trusts, and loves, and hopes on, in spite of carelessness, and coldness, and neglect, and extravagance, and—and *Parties Fine*.

This is the moral of the last story. O, ye Wagstaffs of this world, profit by it. O, ye gentle, meek angels of Arabellas, be meek and gentle still. If an angel can't reclaim a man, who can ? And I live in hopes of hearing that by the means of that charming mediation, the odious Lancelot has become a reformed character.

TITMARSH.

## GREENWICH—WHITEBAIT.

BY MR. WAGSTAFF.

I WAS recently talking in a very touching and poetical strain about the above delicate fish to my friend Foozle and some others at the club, and expatiating upon the excellence of the dinner which our little friend Guttlebury had given us: when Foozle, looking round about him with an air of triumph and immense wisdom, said,

‘I’ll tell you what, Wagstaff, I’m a plain man, and despise all your gormandising and kickshaws. I don’t know the difference between one of your absurd made dishes and another—give me a plain cut of mutton or beef. I’m a plain Englishman, I am, and no glutton.’

Foozle, I say, thought this speech a terrible set down for me—and indeed acted up to his principles—you may see him any day at six sitting down before a great reeking joint of meat; his eyes quivering, his face red, and he cutting great smoking red collops out of the beef before him, which he devours with corresponding quantities of cabbage and potatoes, and the other gratis luxuries of the club-table.

What I complain of is, not that the man should enjoy his great meal of steaming beef; let him be happy over that as much as the beef he is devouring was in life happy over oil-cakes or mangel-wurzel: but I hate the fellow’s brutal self-complacency, and his scorn of other people who have different tastes from his. A man who brags regarding himself; that whatever he swallows is the same to him, and that his coarse palate recognises no difference between venison and turtle, pudding or mutton-broth, as his indifferent jaws close over them, brags about a personal defect—the wretch—and not about a virtue. It is like a man boasting that he has no ear for music, or no eye for colour, or that his nose cannot scent the difference between a rose and a cabbage—I say, as a general rule, set that man down as a conceited fellow, who swaggers about not caring for his dinner.

Why shouldn't we care about it? Was eating not made to be a pleasure to us? Yes, I say, a daily pleasure: a sweet *solamen*: a pleasure familiar, yet ever new, the same and yet how different! It is one of the causes of domesticity: the neat dinner makes the husband pleased, the housewife happy, the children consequently are well brought up and love their papa and mamma. A good dinner is the centre of the circle of the social sympathies—it warms acquaintanceship into friendship—it maintains that friendship comfortably unimpaired: enemies meet over it and are reconciled. How many of you, dear friends, has that last bottle of claret warmed into affectionate forgiveness, tender recollections of old times, and ardent, glowing anticipations of new. The brain is a tremendous secret. I believe some chemist will arise anon, who will know how to doctor the brain as they do the body now, as Liebig doctors the ground. They will apply certain medicines, and produce crops of certain qualities that are lying dormant now for want of intellectual guano. But this is a subject for future speculation—a parenthesis growing out of another parenthesis—what I would urge especially here is a point which must be familiar to every person accustomed to eat good dinners—viz., the noble and friendly qualities that they elicit. How is it we cut such jokes over them? How is it we become so remarkably friendly? How is it that some of us, inspired by a good dinner, have sudden gusts of genius unknown in the quiet unfestive state? Some men make speeches, some shake their neighbour by the hand, and invite him or themselves to dine—some sing prodigiously—my friend, Saladin, for instance, goes home, he says, with the most beautiful harmonies ringing in his ears: and I, for my part, will take any given tune, and make variations upon it for any given period of hours, greatly, no doubt, to the delight of all hearers. These are only temporary inspirations given us by the jolly genius, but are they to be despised on that account? No. Good dinners have been the greatest vehicles of benevolence since man began to eat.

A taste for good living then is praiseworthy in moderation—like all the other qualities and endowments of man. If a man were to neglect his family or his business on account of his love for the fiddle or the fine arts—he would commit just the crime that the dinner-sensualist is guilty of; but to enjoy wisely is a maxim of which no man need be ashamed. But if you cannot eat a dinner of herbs as well as a stalled-ox, then you are an unfortunate man—your love for good dinners has passed the wholesome boundary, and degenerated into gluttony.

Oh, shall I ever forget the sight of the only city dinner I ever attended in my life! at the hall of the Right Worshipful



Company of Chimney-sweepers—it was in May, and a remarkably late pea-season. The hall was decorated with banners and escutcheons of deceased *chummies*—martial music resounded from the balconies as the master of the company and the great ones marched in. We sat down, grace was said, the tureen-covers removed, and instantly a silence in the hall—a breathless silence—and then a great gurgle!—grwlw!w!w!w! it sounded like. The worshipful company were sucking in the turtle! Then came the venison, and with it were two hundred quarts of peas, at five-and-twenty shillings a quart—oh, my heart sank within me, as we devoured the green ones! as the old waddling, trembling, winking citizens, held out their plates quivering with anxiety, and, said Mr. Jones, ‘A little bit of the f-f-fat, another spoonful of the p-p-pe-eas’—and they swallowed them down, the prematurely born children of the spring—and there were thousands in London that day without bread.

This is growing serious—and is a long grace before whitebait, to be sure—but at a whitebait dinner, haven’t you remarked that you take a number of dishes first? In the first place, water-soupy, soochy, or soojy—flounder-soupy is incomparably, exquisitely the best—perch is muddy, bony, and tough, compared to it; slips are coarse; and salmon—perhaps salmon is next to the flounder. You hear many people exclaim against flounder-soupy—I dined with Jorrocks, Sangsue, the Professor, and one or two more, only the other day, and they all voted it tasteless—tasteless! It has an almost angelic delicacy of flavour: it is as fresh as the recollections of childhood—it wants a Correggio’s pencil to describe it with sufficient tenderness.

‘*If a flounder had two backs,*’ Saladin said at the Star and Garter the other day, ‘it would be divine!’

Foolish man, whither will your wild desires carry you? As he is, a flounder is a perfect being. And the best reply to those people who talk about its tastelessness, is to say ‘Yes,’ and draw over the tureen to yourself, and never leave it while a single slice of brown bread remains beside it, or a single silver-breasted fishlet floats in the yellow parsley-flavoured wave.

About eels, salmon, lobsters, either *au gratin* or in cutlets, and about the variety of sauces—Genevese sauce. Indian sauce (a strong but agreeable compound), etc., I don’t think it is necessary to speak. The slimy eel is found elsewhere than in the stream of Thames (I have tasted him charmingly matelotted with mushrooms and onions at the Marroniers at Passy), the lusty salmon flaps in other waters—by the fair tree-clad banks of Lismore—by

the hospitable margin of Ballynahinch—by the beauteous shores of Wye, and on the sandy flats of Scheveling, I have eaten and loved him. I do not generally eat him at Greenwich. Not that he is not good. But he is not good in such a place. It is like Mrs. Siddons dancing a hornpipe, or a chapter of Burke in a novel—the salmon is too *vast* for Greenwich.

I would say the same, and more, regarding turtle. It has no business in such a feast as that fresh and simple one provided at the Trafalgar or the Old Ship. It is indecorous somehow to serve it in that company. A fine, large, lively turtle, and a poor little whitebait by his side! Ah, it is wrong to place them by each other.

At last we come to the bait—the twelve dishes of preparatory fish are removed, the Indian sauced salmon has been attacked in spite of our prohibition, the stewed eels have been mauled, and the flounder soup-tureen is empty. All those receptacles of pleasure are removed—eyes turn eagerly to the door, and enter

Mr. Derbyshire (with a silver dish of whitebait).

John (brown bread and butter).

Samuel (lemons and cayenne).

Frederick (a dish of whitebait).

Gustavus (brown bread and butter).

Adolphus (whitebait).

A waiter with a napkin, which he flaps about the room in an easy *dégagé* manner.

‘There’s plenty more to follow, sir,’ says Mr. D., whisking off the cover. Frederick and Adolphus pass rapidly round with their dishes; John and Gustavus place their refreshments on the table, and Samuel obsequiously insinuates the condiments under his charge.

Ah! he must have had a fine mind who first invented brown bread and butter with whitebait! That man was a kind, modest, gentle benefactor to his kind. We don’t recognise sufficiently the merits of those men who leave us such quiet benefactions. A statue ought to be put up to the philosopher who joined together this charming couple. Who was it? Perhaps it was done by the astronomer at Greenwich, who observed it when seeking for some other discovery. If it were the astronomer—why, the next time we go to Greenwich we will go into the Park and ascend the hill, and pay our respects to the Observatory.

That, by the way, is another peculiarity about Greenwich. People leave town, and *say* they will walk in the park before dinner. But we never do. We may suppose there is a park from seeing trees; but we have never entered it. We walk wistfully up and down on the terrace before the Hospital, looking

at the clock a great many times; at the brown old seamen basking in the sun; at the craft on the river; at the nursery-maids mayhap, and the gambols of the shrill-voiced Jacks-ashore on the beach. But the truth is, one's thinking of something else all the time. Of the bait. Remark how silent fellows are on steamboats going down to Greenwich. They won't acknowledge it, but they are thinking of what I tell you.

Well, when the whitebait does come, what is it after all? Come now. Tell us, my dear sir, your real sentiments about this fish, this little, little fish about which we all make such a noise! There it lies. Lemon it, pepper it: pop it into your mouth—and what then?—a crisp crunch, and it is gone. Does it realise your expectations—is it better than anything you ever tasted? Is it as good as raspberry open tarts used to be at school? Come, upon your honour and conscience now, is it better than a fresh dish of tittlebacks or gudgeons?

O, fool, to pry with too curious eye into these secrets! O, blunderer, to wish to dash down a fair image because it may be of plaster! O, dull philosopher, not to know that pursuit is pleasure, and possession worthless without it! I, for my part, never will, as long as I live, put to myself that question about whitebait. Whitebait is a butterfly of the waters—and as the animal mentioned by Lord Byron invites the young pursuer near, and leads him through thy fields Cashmere—as it carries him in his chase through a thousand agreeable paths scented with violets, sparkling with sunshine, with beauty to feast his eyes, and health in the air—let the right-thinking man be content with the pursuit, nor inquire too curiously about the object. How many hunters get the brush of the fox, and what, when gotten, is the worth of that tawny wisp of hair?

Whitebait, then, is only a little means for acquiring a great deal of pleasure. Somehow, it is always allied with sunshine: it is always accompanied by jolly friends and good-humour. You rush after that little fish, and leave the cares of London behind you—the row and struggle, the foggy darkness, the slippery pavement where every man jostles you, striding on his way, preoccupied with care written on his brow. Look out of the window, the sky is tinted with a thousand glorious hues—the ships pass silent over the blue glittering waters—there is no object within sight that is not calm, and happy, and beautiful. Yes! turn your head a little, and there lie the towers of London in the dim smoky sunset. There lies Care, Labour, To-morrow. Friends, let us have another glass of claret, and thank our luck that we have still to-day.

On thinking over the various whitebait dinners which have fallen to our lot in the last month—somehow you are sure to find the remembrance of them all pleasant. I have seen some wretches taking whitebait and *tea*, which has always inspired me with a sort of terror, and a yearning to go up to the miserable objects so employed, and say, ‘My good friend, here is a crown-piece, have a bottle of iced punch, or a tankard of delicious cider-cup—but not tea, dear sir; no, no, not tea; you can get that at home—there’s no exhilaration in congo. It was not made to be drunk on holidays. Those people are unworthy of the Ship; I don’t wish to quarrel with the enjoyments of any man, but fellows who take tea and whitebait should not be allowed to damp the festive feelings of persons better engaged. They should be consigned to the smiling damsels whom one meets on the walk to Mr. Derbyshire’s, who issue from dingy tenements no bigger than houses in pantomime, and who, whatever may be the rank of the individual, persist in saying, ‘Tea, sir—I can accommodate your party—tea, sir,—srimps?’

About the frequenters of Greenwich and the various classes of ichthyophagi, many volumes might be written. All classes of English Christians, with the exception of her Majesty and Prince Albert (and the more is the pity that their exalted rank deprives them of an amusement so charming!) frequent the hospitable taverns, the most celebrated gormandiser and the very humble. There are the annual Ministerial Saturnalia, which, whenever I am called in by her Majesty, I shall have great pleasure in describing in these pages, and in which the lowest becomes the highest for the occasion, and Taper and Tadpole take just as high a rank as Lord Eskdale or Lord Monmouth. There are the private banquets in which Lord Monmouth diverts himself with his friends from the little French—but this subject has been already touched upon at much length. There are the lawyers’ dinners, when Sir Frederick or Sir William are advanced to the honour of the bench or the attorney-generalship, and where much legal pleasantry is elicited. The last time I dined at the Ship, hearing a dreadful Bacchanalian noise issuing from a private apartment, I was informed, ‘*It’s the gentlemen of “Punch,” sir.*’ What would I not have given to be present at such an assembly of choice spirits. Even missionary societies and converters of the Quashindoo Indians come hither for a little easy, harmless, pleasuring after their labours, and no doubt the whitebait slips down their reverend throats, and is relished by them as well as by the profane crowd.

Then in the coffee-room, let a man be by himself, and he is

never lonely. Every table tells its little history. Yonder sit three city bucks, with all the elegant graces of the Custom-house and the Stock Exchange.

'That's a good glass of wine,' says Wiggins.

'Ropy,' says Figgins; 'I'll put you in a pipe of that to stand you in three-and-twenty a dozen.'

Once, in my presence, I heard a city '*gent*' speak so slightly of a glass of very excellent brown sherry, that the landlord was moved almost to tears, and made a speech, of which the sorrow was only equalled by the indignation.

Sporting young fellows come down in great numbers, with cut-away coats and riding-whips, which must be very useful on the water. They discourse learnedly about Leander and Running Rein, and say, 'I'll bet you three to two on that.'

Likewise pink-faced lads from Oxford and Cambridge. Those from the former university wear lavender-coloured gloves, and drink much less wine than their jolly comrades from the banks of Cam. It would be a breach of confidence to report their conversation; but I lately heard some very interesting anecdotes about the Master of Trinity, and one Bumpkins, a gyp there.

Of course there are foreigners. I have remarked many 'Mosaic Arabs' who dress and drink remarkably smartly; honest, pudding-faced Germans, who sit sentimentally over their punch; and chattering little Frenchmen with stays, and whiskers, and canes, and little lacquered boots. These worthies drink ale, for the most part saying '*Je ne bois que l'ale moi*,' or '*que la bière est bonne en Angleterre*.' '*Et que le vin est mauvais*,' shrieks out the pigmy addressed, and so they club their sixpence, and remain faithful to the malt-and-hoppish liquor. It may be remarked, that ladies and Frenchmen are not favourites with inn-waiters, coach-guards, cabmen, and such officials, doubtless for reasons entirely mercenary.

I could continue for many more pages, but the evening grey is tinging the river; the packet-boat bells are ringing; the sails of the ships look greyer and more ghostlike as they sweep silently by. It is time to be thinking of returning, and so let us call for the bill, and finish with a moral. My dear, sir, it is this. The weather is beautiful. The whitebait singularly fine this season. You are sure to be happy if you go to Greenwich. Go then; and above all, TAKE YOUR AMIABLE LADY WITH YOU.

Ah! if but ten readers will but follow this advice, Lancelot Wagstaff has not written in vain, and has made ten charming women happy!



## THE CHEST OF CIGARS.

BY LANCELOT WAGSTAFF, ESQ.

‘NOT smoke?’ said the gentleman near me. We had the honour of dining at my Lord Hobanob’s, who ‘smokes’ after dinner, as all the world knows. The person who spoke was called the General by the company assembled.

‘Not smoke?’ says he.

‘Why—I—that is—what would Mrs. Caudle say?’ replied I, with a faint effort to be pleasant; ‘for the fact is, though my wife doesn’t like cigars, I was once very fond of them.’

‘Is your lady a sentimental woman?’ asked the general.

‘Extremely sentimental.’

‘Of a delicate turn?’

‘Very much so; this is the first time I have been permitted—I mean that I have had any wish to dine out since my marriage,’ said the reader’s humble servant.

‘If I can prove to her that the happiness of a virtuous family was secured by cigars; that an admirable woman was saved from ruin by smoking; that a worthy man might have been driven to suicide but for Havannahs: do you think, sir, that *then*, the respected lady who owns you, would alter her opinion regarding the immorality of smoking?’

And so saying, the general handed me his box, and sent a puff so fragrant into my face, that I must own I took a cigar as he commenced his romantic tale in the following words:—

‘When our army was in Holland, in the time of the lamented Duke of York, the 56th Hussars (Queen Charlotte’s Own Slashers, as we were called from our tremendous ferocity) were quartered in the romantic vicinity of Vaterzouchy. A more gallant regiment never fought, conquered, or ran away, and we did all in that campaign. A better fellow than our colonel never existed,—a drier friend than Frederick Fantail, who was lieutenant in the troop I had the honour to command, mortal never had.’

Here my informant the general’s fine eye (for he had but one

remaining) filled with tears, and he gave a deep sigh through the lung which had not been perforated at the battle of Salamanca.

'Fantail had one consuming passion besides military glory,—this was smoking. His pipe was never out of his lips from morning till night—till night? What did I say? He never went to bed without this horrible companion, and I have seen this misguided young man, seated on a barrel of gunpowder in the batteries, smoking as calmly as if death were not close under his coat-tails.

'To these two passions my friend speedily added another: a love for the charming daughter of Burgomaster van Slappenbroch, whom he met one day in his rambles.

"I should never probably have remarked her, Goliah," he would say to me, "but for the circumstance that her father smoked a peculiar fine canaster. I longed to know him from that circumstance; and as he always moved about with his pipe, and his daughter, from getting to admire one, I began to appreciate the other, and soon Amelia occupied my whole soul. My figure and personal beauty soon attracted her attention:

In fact,

She saw and loved me, who could resist

Frederic Fantail?

'Amelia, sir, soon became Mrs. Fantail, but I shall spare you the details of the courtship at which I was not present; for having at the battle of Squelterslys (so creditable to our arms) had the good fortune to run through a French field-marshal and to receive a wound in the knee-pan, I was ordered home with the account of the victory, to lay the baton I had taken at the feet of my sovereign, and to have my left leg amputated by the late eminent Sir Everard Home. 'Twas whilst recovering from this little accident, that my friend Fred Fantail wooed and won his Amelia.

'Of course he described her in his letters as everything a heart could wish; but I found, on visiting his relations in Baker Street, that she was by no means what *they* could wish. When I mentioned the name of his son, the brow of Sir Augustus Fantail grew black as thunder. Her ladyship looked sad and faint; Anna Maria turned her lovely, imploring eyes upon me beseeching me to silence, and I saw a gleam of fiendish satisfaction twinkling in the mean green squinters of Simon Fantail, Fred's younger brother, which plainly seemed to say, "Fred is disinherited, I shall come in for the £300,000 now." Sir Augustus had that sum in the family, and was, as you all know, an eminent city man.

‘I learned from the lovely Anna Maria (in the embrasure of the drawing-room window, whither *somehow* we retired for a little conversation which does not concern you), I learned that Sir Augustus’ chief rage against Fred arose from his having married the daughter of a Dutch *sugar-baker*. As the knight had been a drysalter himself, he would not overlook this insult to his family, and vowed he would cut off for ever the child who had so dishonoured him.

‘Nor was this all.

“‘Oh, Major,” said Anna Maria to me, putting into my hands a little purse, containing the amount of all her savings, “give him—give him this. My poor Frederick wants money. *He ran away with Amelia*—how could they do such a naughty, naughty thing? He has left the army. Her father has discarded her; and I fear they are starving.”

‘Here the dear child’s beautiful hyacinthine eyes filled with tears; she held out her little hand with the little purse. I took one—both—I covered the one with kisses, and putting the other into my bosom, I promised to deliver it to the person for whom its affectionate owner intended it.

‘Did I do so? No! I kept that precious relic with thirteen little golden guineas twinkling in its meshes; I wore it long, long in my heart of hearts, under my waistcoat of waistcoats; and as for Fred, I sent him an order on Cox and Greenwood’s for *five hundred pounds*, as the books of that house will show.

‘I did more than this: knowing his partiality for cigars, I bought two thousand of the best from Davis in the Quadrant, and despatched them to my poor friend.

“‘A wife,” said I, “is a good companion, no doubt; but why should he not,” I added sportively, “have *Dos AMIGOS*, too, in his troubles?”

‘Davis did not laugh at this joke, not understanding Spanish; but you, my dear friend, I have no doubt, will at once perceive its admirable point.

‘Thus it stood then. Amelia was disinherited for running away with Fred; Fred was discarded for running away with Amelia. They were penniless. What could my paltry *thousand* do for a fellow in the 56th Hussars, where our yearly mess bill came to twelve hundred a year, and our undress boots cost ninety-three guineas a pair? You are incredulous? I have Hoby’s bills, sir, and you can see them any day you call in Grosvenor Square.

‘To proceed. My imprudent friend was married; and was, as I suspect you are yourself, sir, hen-pecked. My present of cigars was flung aside as useless.

‘I got letters from Fred saying that his Amelia was a mighty fine lady; that though she had been bred up in a tobacco warehouse all her life, she abominated cigars,—in fine, that he had given up the practice altogether.

‘My little loan of a *couple of thousand* served to keep them going for some time, and they dashed on as if there was no end to that small sum. *Ruin* ensued, sir, but I knew not of the misfortunes of my friend. I was abroad, sir, serving my sovereign in the West Indies, where I had the yellow fever seventeen times.

‘Soldiers are bad correspondents, sir. I did not write to Fred Fantail, or hear of him, except through a brother officer, Major de Boots, of ours, who joined us in the West Indies, and who told me the sad news.

‘Fred had incurred debts, of course—sold out—gone to pieces. “And fanthy my dithgutht, my dear cweature,” said De Boots (you don’t know him? he lisps confoundedly), at finding Fwed at Bwighton giving lessons in dwawing, and hith wife, because she wath a Dutchwoman, teaching Fwench! The fellow wanted to bowow money of me.”

“And you gave him some, I hope, De Boots?” said I.

“Not thiekthpenth, by jingo,” said the heartless hussar, whom I called out the next morning and shot for his want of feeling.

‘I returned to England to recruit my strength, which had been somewhat exhausted by the repeated attacks of fever, and one day, as I was taking a tumbler at the great pump-room, Cheltenham, imagine, sir, my astonishment, when an enormously stout lady, with yellow hair, and a pea-green satin dress, came up to me, gazed hard for a moment, gave an hysteric juggle in her throat, and flung her arms round my neck! I have led ninety-eight forlorn-hopes, sir, but I give you my honour I was never so flustered as by this tremendous phenomenon.

“For Heaven’s sake, madam,” said I, “calm yourself. Don’t scream—let me go. Who are you?”

“O my bresairfer!” said the lady, still screeching, and in a foreign accent. “Don’t you know me? I am Amelia Vandail.”

“Amelia Vandale?” says I, more perplexed than ever.

“Amelia van Slappenbroch dat vas. Your friend Vrederic’s wife. I am *stouter* now dan I vas when I knew you in Holland.”

‘Stouter indeed! I believe she *was* stouter. She was sixteen stone, or sixteen ten, if she weighed a pound; I got her off my shoulders, and led her to a chair. Presently her husband joined us, and I need not tell you of the warmth of my meeting with my old friend.

"But what," said I to Fantail, "procured me such a warm greeting from your lovely lady?"

"Don't you know that you are our benefactor—our blessing—the cause of our prosperity?"

"O! the five thousand pounds," said I,—“a mere bagatelle.”

"No, my dearest friend, it was not your money, but your *cigars*, saved us. You know what a fine lady my wife was, when we were first married? and to what straits our mutual imprudence soon drove us. Who would have thought that the superb Mrs. Fantail, who was so fine that she would not allow her husband to smoke a cigar, should be brought so low as to be obliged to sing in the public streets for bread?—that the dashing Fred Fantail should be so debased by poverty (here my friend's noble features assumed an expression of horrible agony), as to *turn a mangle*, sir.

"But away with these withering recollections," continued Fred. "We were so poor, so wretched, that we resolved on *suicide*. My wife and I determined to fling ourselves off Waterloo Bridge, and kissing our nine innocent babes as they slumbered, hastened wildly thither from the New Cut, Lambeth, where we were residing; but we forgot, *we had no money to pay the toll*—we were forced to come back, to pass our door again: and we determined to see the dear ones once more, and *then*—away to Westminster!

"There was a smell—a smell of tobacco issuing from the door of our humble hut as we came up. 'Good heavens, Mealy,' said I to my beloved one, as we arrived at the door, and the thought flashed across me,—‘there is still hope—still something left—the cigars I received as a gift on my marriage. I had forgotten them—they are admirable!—they will sell for gold.’ And I hugged the innocent partner of my sufferings to my bosom. Thou wert thinner then, dearest, than thou art now,” said Fantail, with a glance of ineffable affection towards his lady.

"Well, sir, what do you think those cigars were worth to me?" continued he.

"I gave forty pounds for them: say you sold them for twenty."

"Twenty! My dear fellow—no! Those cigars were worth SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS to me! as you shall hear. I said there was a smell of cigar smoke issuing from our humble cot—and why? Because somebody was smoking cigars. And who was that somebody? Amelia's father, the burgomaster, Van Slappenbroch. His heart had partially relented towards his only child. He determined to see her. He found out our wretched abode in our absence—saw our unconscious infants sleeping there, huddled on the straw in the desolate chamber. The only article



of furniture left *was your chest of cigars*. Van Slappenbroch opened it—tried one—'twas excellent; a second—delicious! a third!—his daughter entered—the father and the tobacconist melted at once, and as she fainted in his arms he was reconciled to us for ever!”

‘The rest of Fantail’s story, my dear sir, you may easily imagine. Directly they heard in Baker Street that the Dutchman had pardoned his daughter and given her his fortune, of course old Fantail came down with his, and disinherited that squinting traitor, Simon. “And, my dear fellow,” said Fred, “if you will drive down with me to Fantail Castle, I will pay you the ten thousand pounds you lent me, and introduce you to a lady—my sister Anna Maria, who is very, *very* anxious to renew her acquaintance with you.”

‘That lady is now my wife, sir,’ the general said, getting up to go away,—‘and *she* never objects to smoking.’

‘Who is the general?’ I said to my host, when the teller of the above singular story had left the room.

‘Don’t you know him?’ replied Lord Hobanob, with a smile: ‘you may believe every word he says. That is General Sir Goliah Gahagan.’

## BOB ROBINSON'S FIRST LOVE.

BY LANCELOT WAGSTAFF, ESQ.

CLERGYMEN who take private pupils upon small livings in the West of England, and prepare young gentlemen for the universities or for public life, ought to be obliged by law to destroy their female offspring, as certain Indian people do—or at least there should be convents or hospitals for the daughters of the tutoring clergy, where, until their papas had left off ‘coaching’ (as the Oxford phrase was—it is perhaps changed since our time), these virgins should be carefully immured. For it is next to impossible that lads of eighteen years of age should be put in the daily presence of a rosy-fingered young creature, who makes breakfast every morning in a pink frock, who trips across the common with good things in her basket for the suffering poor people of papa’s parish; and who plays the most ravishing tunes on the piano in the evening after tea, when mathematics and the Greek plays are no longer thought of, when papa solaces himself with the *St. James’s Chronicle*, when Smith and Jones amuse themselves with chess, and Robinson, who is musically inclined, accompanies Eliza on the flute;—it is next, I say, to impossible that something should not happen from the presence of such a young woman in a tutor’s family—something delightful at its commencement, but often productive of woe, perplexity, and family annoyance ere its conclusion. Dear madam or miss! I will not insult you by naming it—you have often inspired that something, and many a manly heart has suffered because you were inevitably fair!

So, too, was Miss Griggs, daughter of the clergyman under whose charge several of us completed our education. He took a limited number of young men of distinguished family to prepare for the universities. He had a son at Cambridge, whose extravagance, he would hint, was the cause of his taking pupils; and his lovely daughter, Eliza, kept his house. When parents and guardians would remark on the comeliness of the young woman, and hint that her presence might be dangerous to the peace of

mind of the pupils, old Griggs would fling his eyes up to Heaven and say, 'I consider that dear girl, sir, to be married. She is engaged to her cousin, the Reverend Samuel Butts, fellow and tutor of Maudlin; and when the first living falls vacant,—alas! my Eliza will leave me. Would you have me part with her now? And yet, were she not engaged, she should not live under my roof, but reside, as she used to do previous to her engagement, with her angel mother's family.' Here old Griggs' white handkerchief would come out, and as with a trembling voice he uttered these words, his bald forehead, white head, hook nose, and white neckcloth, never failed to impose respect upon his hearers; and parents thought their children lucky under the care of such a man.

But Butts was absent: we saw nothing of him save occasionally in vacation time, when he made his appearance in the shape of a dumpy little flaccid-faced man, who wore high-lows, and no straps to his trousers. He made but a poor figure by the side of the brilliant young bucks at Griggs', who dressed for dinner, had their clothes from Clifford Street, and wore yellow kid gloves at church on Sundays. I think Miss G. (we did not like to call her Miss Griggs, somehow) must have seen the disadvantage under which her Samuel laboured in the company of young men of the world. But he was an honest man, great at the digamma; and Miss G. had been engaged to him years ago, before her brother's extravagance at college had compelled pa to take pupils. She wore a lock of his sandy hair in a seven-shilling brooch round her neck; and there was a sticking-plaster full-length of him in his cap and gown, done by the fellow from Brighton, who had hit off to a nicety his little bunch of a nose, and his dumpy, pudgy figure and high-lows, hanging up in the dining-room.

Robinson (he who played the flute) used to look at that black figure with violent rage and disgust, shake his fist at it, utter tremendous comminations against Butts as a snob, and wish that either one were dead or the other had never been born, for his soul was consumed with passion for Eliza Griggs, and his heart was scorched with the flames of a first love.

Do not be alarmed for the consequences, madam; don't expect any harrowing romance—*wir haben auch geliebt und gelebet*—we have endured it and survived it, as other people do. It is like the small-pox, diminished in virulence, and doesn't carry off half so many people as it used according to old accounts. 'They have been engaged for seven years,' Robinson used to say, making us confidants of his love, and howling and raging about it as young men of his ardent temperament will do, 'but she can't care about

him ; I know she can't : look how the brute squints ; and see him eat peas with his knife,—I could throttle him.' It was quite true : Butts had that obliquity, and consumed his vegetables with the aid of the implement in question. Another day he would come out with, 'She was a child when the engagement was made. He is a brute to hold her to it. He might have married her years ago, but he is waiting for the £1200 a year great living, which may never fall in. The selfish scoundrel ought to release her from her engagement.' But he didn't. The promise was there. The locket hung round her neck. 'I confide these things to you as a friend—a brother,' Eliza would say. 'But let me submit to my destiny. What are you men but selfish ! all, all selfish ! Unfortunate Eliza !'

Don't imagine I am going to say anything disrespectful of her—don't fancy I would hint that she was unfaithful to her Butts—in love-matters women are never in fault. I never heard of a coquette in my life—nor of a woman playing with a man's affections and heartlessly flinging him off—nor of a woman marrying for money—nor of a sly mother who coaxed and wheedled a young fellow, until somehow Jemima was off her hands. No, no, the women are always right, and the author of *Mrs. Caudle's Lectures* ought to be pulled to pieces like Orpheus for vilifying the sex.

Eliza, then, did not give the least encouragement to young Robinson, though somehow they were always together. You couldn't go into the garden, and see the pink frock among the gooseberry bushes, but Robinson's green shooting-jacket was seen sauntering by ; in the evening their flute and piano were always tweedledeedling in concert—and they never stopped until they had driven us out of the room with their music, when unaccountably the duet would cease. How was it that when miss was on the landing-place, Robinson was always coming upstairs ? So it was, though. They were talking about Mr. Butts probably. What was that lock of hair Robinson kept in his desk ? It may have been his sister's, his grandmother's. Were there not many people with black hair besides Eliza ? And yet the ill-natured might have fancied that some mercenary motives influenced the pure heart of Miss Eliza. Robinson, though six years younger than herself, was perhaps a catch in a pecuniary point of view. He was the son of the famous banking-house of Hobbs, Dobbs, and Robinson ; and when arrived at five-and-twenty (for as for Hobbs and Dobbs they were mere myths, like Child, Coutts, and others) would take his seat as head partner of the house.

His widowed mother was a Miss Rolfe, daughter of Admiral

Rolfe, and sister of Sir Hugh Rolfe, K.C.B. Mr. Rolfe Robinson our young friend was called, being not a little proud of his double-barrelled name. By us he was denominated Rich Robinson, Kid Robinson, or Band-box Robinson, alluding to the wealth to which he was heir, and the splendour of his person,—or finally, in compliment to a hesitation in his speech which he possessed—Staggering Bob. He was, between ourselves, a weak, fair-haired, rapid, good-natured fellow: at Eton he was called Miss Robinson. Every one of his nicknames justly characterised some peculiarity about the honest fellow.

Huffle (belonging to the firm), Rolfe, and his mother, were joint guardians of this interesting heir. His lady mother spent her jointure in a stately way, occupying a great mansion in Portman Square, and giving grand parties in the season, whereof *The Morning Post* made mention; Royal dukes, ambassadors, never less than three marquises. Griggs, our tutor, never failed to read the names of these guests, to talk about them at dinner—and I think felt proud at having Mrs. Robinson's son in his house, who entertained such exalted company.

He always helped Bob first in consequence, and gave him the wings of the fowls, and the outside of the fillet of veal.

However, Mrs. Robinson had many daughters older than Bob; and though she lived so splendidly, and though Bob was to be chief of the banking-house, the young man himself was not very well supplied with cash by his mother. But he did not want for friends elsewhere; and there was a certain old clerk in the bank who furnished his young master with any sums that he required—'out of regard for his dear father' the before-mentioned clerk used to say—of course never expecting to be paid back again, or to curry favour with his young principal so soon as he took the direction of affairs. From this man Robinson used to get down chests of cigars and cases of liquors and champagne, which he consumed in secret, at a certain cottage in the village. Nokes it was who provided surreptitious funds for the hiring of tandems, which in our youthful days we delighted to drive. Many a man at Griggs', who had only his father's purse to draw upon, envied Robinson such an invaluable friend as Nokes.

Well, this youth was in love with Miss Eliza Griggs. Her father was quite ignorant of the passion, of course—never dreamed of such a thing. Fathers are so proverbially blind!

Young Griggs, the Cambridge man, seldom came down among us, except to bleed the Governor. A wild and impetuous young man he was; not respectable, and of a bad set,—but we lads respected him because he was a man, and had rooms of his own,



and told us stories about Proctors and Newmarket; and had a cut-away green coat and large whiskers—to all of which honours we one day hoped to come.

One Easter vacation when young Griggs came down, however, we observed he watched his sister and Robinson very keenly; spoke harshly to the former, at which the latter would grow very angry; and finally, one day after dinner, when, as usual after the second glass of port, Griggs had given the signal for retiring, touched Robinson on the shoulder as we were quitting the dining-room, and said, 'Mr. Robinson, I would wish to have a word with you on the lawn.' At this summons I observed Robinson turn as red as a carrot, and give a hurried glance at Eliza, who very nearly dropped the bottle she was locking up of old Griggs' fiery port wine.

The particulars of the interview between the two gentlemen Robinson narrated to me that very evening (indeed, he told everybody everything concerning himself). 'Griggs,' says he, 'has been asking me what my intentions are with regard to Eliza. He says my attentions to her are most remarkable; that I must have known she was already an engaged person, though he didn't care to confess that the engagement was one into which his sister had been forced, and which had never been pleasing to her—but that it was impossible that my attentions should continue, or the poor girl's affections be tampered with any further.

"Tampered with!" says I (continued Robinson, speaking for himself), "*I* tamper with the affections of Miss Griggs!"

"By Jove, sir, do you mean to say that you have not? Haven't you given her a pearl necklace and a copy of Thomas Moore's poems? Haven't you written copies of verses to her, three in English and one in Latin Alcaics? Do you suppose, sir, as a man of honour, I can allow my sister's feelings to be played with, and you an inmate under my unsuspecting father's roof? No, sir, things can't end here. You must either declare yourself, or—you know the alternative."

Here he gave a tremendous scowl, and his eyes flashed so, and his bushy whiskers curled round his face so fiercely, that Robinson, a timid man—as almost all men who play the flute are—felt no small degree of perturbation.

'But I *do* declare myself,' said the young gentleman: 'I declare that I love your sister with all the ardour of a young heart; that she is the object of my daily thoughts and my nightly sighs—my soul's pole-star—my—my——'

'Never mind any more, sir,' replied young Griggs, somewhat

appeared ; 'you have said all this in your poetry already.' As Robinson confessed, indeed he had.

The result of the interview between the young men was that Robinson declared himself the adorer of Eliza, and promised to marry her immediately on the consent of his mother and guardians, if not now, upon his coming of age and entering into the banking business which he was heir to.

'I may consider myself authorised on your part, then, to make this proposal to my sister?' said Griggs.

To which Bob agreed, and as Griggs thought the offer had best come in writing, Robinson and he retired to the former's room, where a paper was drawn out at Griggs' direction, and signed by the lover of Eliza.

But the strange part of the story, and the proof of what I before advanced—viz., that Eliza was perfectly innocent and unconscious of the effects produced by her fatal beauty—was that when George Griggs, her brother, carried her the offer, she vowed she had never been so surprised in her life—had never given Mr. Robinson the least encouragement—had, it is true, received presents of books from him and verses, which she regarded as mere proofs of schoolboy friendship, a *frolic*,—liked him very much certainly as a brother, in whose welfare she should ever feel the tenderest interest, for whose happiness she should ever pray—but she was certainly engaged to Mr. Butts.

Bob professed to be broken-hearted by this sentence of Eliza's, but we all saw there was hope for him, and that if the engagement with Butts could be broken, he might then aspire to the bliss which he desiderated. As for checking him in his desires, or pointing out the folly of his marriage at eighteen with a young lady of four-and-twenty, *that* was a point which struck none of us—on the contrary, our pleasure was to suppose that old Griggs would refuse consent, that an elopement would take place in consequence, which Bob's friends would have the fun of arranging ; and we even inspected the post-chaise at the Green Dragon, and ascertained the condition of the posters kept there, in anticipation of such an event. Not that Eliza would have consented—of course not—I would not suppose that she or any other woman would do such a thing, and mention this as an instance, not of her indiscretion, but of our youthful folly.

Meanwhile, Mr. George Griggs returned to the University, having made an unsuccessful application, he said, upon the governor's feelings, to induce him to break off his sister's marriage with Butts.

'The old gentleman's honour was bound,' his son said ; 'he

wished it were otherwise, but having pledged it, he could not withdraw it; and as soon as Butts pleased he might claim his bride. The living Butts desires must soon fall in,' he added: 'Hicky has had two fits of apoplexy already. Give him a third, and it will be too late.'

With this intimation George Griggs departed, informing his young friend at the same time, that although he would gladly have shaken his hand as a brother-in-law, that relationship appeared now to be impossible; and that if he heard of the least further communication between Bob and his sister, he should be obliged to return from Cambridge in a character most painful to him.

'Why, why,' said he, 'did you come into our house, and bring wretchedness into our peaceful family? Before she saw you, my sister was happy,—contented at least with her lot,—now she only looks forward to it with terror, and I dread to think of the consequences. *That match will kill her*, sir—I know Eliza's heart—she will die, sir—and mind me, *there must be other victims if she do!*'

I don't know whether Bob was touched, or terrified, or delighted by this announcement,—delighted to be the possessor of such charms—touched by the cruel havoc they caused—or terrified at the consequences which might ensue to himself from the exercise of his fatal power to please; however, he determined Miss Griggs should *not* die.

He accordingly wrote off the following letter to his correspondent:—

'MY DEAR NOKES—Send me down fifty pounds, and a case of pistols, and put them down to my own account. Counting upon receiving your parcel and remittance per coach, Wednesday, I shall leave this on Wednesday evening at eleven, drive through London to the Angel, Islington, and be there probably at five o'clock in the morning. Have a carriage and four waiting for me there, and you may as well bring fifty pounds more, for posting is dear, and I am going to the North. Don't fail me at *this most critical juncture of my life*, and count upon the eternal gratitude of

ROBERT ROLFE ROBINSON.'

When the faithful Nokes received this letter, he for some time could not understand the nature of its contents, until at last the real meaning flashed upon him, that his young master was going to run away with some lady, and ruin his own and Nokes' prospects for life.

We made it all right, meanwhile, about the horses at the

Green Dragon, which were to be ready at eleven o'clock on Wednesday evening; and in the afternoon of that day walked down to Puddley Heath, two miles from our parsonage, where the London coach passed, and we made sure of finding our parcel.

Instead of the parcel, it was little Nokes himself who jumped off the box, and giving Robinson a squeeze of the hand and a nod of the head, pointed significantly to the carpet-bag, which the hostler was handing down, and which no doubt contained the money and the pistols. What the deuce we wanted with pistols, I have never been able to ascertain—it was Tolmash, our comrade at Griggs', who suggested the pistols, as we sat in conspiracy over the affair (for we delighted in it, and had hours and hours of consultation every night concerning it)—it was, I say, Tolmash suggested the pistols, taking a hint from a picture in *Tom and Jerry*, in which a fellow is represented running away to Gretna Green, and pointing the 'barkers' at the Governor, who is just galloping up.

Bob was so impatient to see these weapons, that it was with great difficulty Nokes could restrain him from examining them on the high-road; but we waited until we got a private room at the Green Dragon, where the weapons were shown, and where Bob explained at full length, and with great eloquence, his purpose of abduction.

'There was a gal, a beuffle gal, whose heart was bweaking for him, and whose pawents wouldn't let him marwy—he was determined to wun away with her if he couldn't get her—to blow his bwains out,' etc. etc.

All this Bob told with great spluttering and emotion over a glass of brandy and water. Nokes looked grave.

'I suppose it's the parson's daughter you wrote me about, that I sent the necklace down for. I thought *that* would have been enough for *her*. Lord, Lord, what fools you young men are, Mr. Bob!'

'Fools! If you call me a fool, or bweathe a word against Eliza, I'll kick you wound the woom,' roared Bob, who didn't seem to have much regard for his father's old friend.

'Well, well,—stop—you'll regret it in after life, and remember the words of poor old faithful Jack Nokes; but never mind *that*. I can take a hard word from your father's son. Here are the pistols; you'd best not take them to the house, as you'll get into the carriage here, I presume. Here's the money—please just acknowledge it—I wash my hands of the business—kick Jack Nokes round the room, indeed!'

Bob seized Mr. Nokes' hand with eagerness, swore he was his

best and dearest friend, as he should find when he came into Lombard Street; and then, being armed with the sinews of war, the chaise was ordered at eleven, and we all departed for the vicarage.

I repeat I have nothing to say against Miss Griggs—she wouldn't have come very likely—she would have spurned the proposition with scorn, and refused to run away altogether, even if—even if a circumstance had not happened which rendered that measure impossible.

At about nine o'clock—the moon was shining beautifully over the old church—Bob was packing his portmanteau for the expedition, and laboriously striving to thrust in a large dressing-case full of silver saucepans, gold razors, etc., which must have been particularly useful to him, as he had no beard yet. We were making ready for the start, I say, when a letter was brought for R. Rolfe Robinson, Esq., in the well-known commercial running-hand of Mr. Nokes.

'SIR—Though I may lose your friendship for ever, I am determined to prevent this mad step on your part. I have written to Mr. Griggs, warning him solemnly, and threatening him with law proceedings and ruin, from which I am confident I have saved you. I was at school with your father, and saved him too, and devote myself to the son as to him.

'I have taken the post-chaise and the pistols back to town with me.

'Yours respectfully,

'JOHN NOKES.'

Bob was bursting out in an oath, when the door opened, and our respected tutor, the Reverend Frederic Griggs, made his awful appearance, candle in hand, and with a most agitated countenance.

'What is this that I hear, Mr. Robinson?' he exclaimed. 'What news, sir, is this for a tutor and a—a f-f-f-ather? Have I been harbouring a traitor in my bosom—a serpent that would sting my innocent child—so young and so corrupted! Oh heavens!'

And he proceeded into an oration, which I pretermitted, and which lasted for a quarter of an hour. Griggs had a flux of words, which imposed greatly upon parents and guardians during a first visit or two, but became intolerably tedious to us who were forced to hear it every day. He left us after the oration, saying he was about to retire, and pray for the misguided young men, who had entered into a conspiracy against a fond father's peace.



Robinson was wild. He talked of suicide, but the pistols were gone, and he didn't think of using the gold razors in the grand new dressing-case. We sat with him, and tried to pacify him with philosophy and a bottle of cherry-brandy. We left him at three o'clock, and he told us that he ran frantically out of the room, to Miss Griggs' bedroom, and cried out passionately, 'Eliza, Eliza!' The door was locked, of course: he could hear sobbing from within, accompanied by the heavy snore of Mrs. West, the housekeeper, who was placed as dragon over the weeping virgin. Poor soul! she did not come down in her pink frock to breakfast next morning.

But about that hour, up drove General Sir Hugh Rolfe, an apoplectic, goggle-eyed, white-whiskered little general, tightly girthed round the waist, with buckskin gloves and a bamboo-cane, at whose appearance, as he rolled out of the yellow post-chaise, poor Bob turned ashy pale.

We presently heard the general swearing in the passage, and the voice of the Reverend Mr. Griggs raised in meek expostulation.

'Fetch down his things—don't humbug me, sir—infamous swindle, sir. Bring down Mr. Robinson's bags—d---d impostor, sir, and so on.'

Volleys of oaths were let off by the fiery little man, which banged and exploded in our little hall like so many Vauxhall crackers.

Our friend was carried off. Our own relatives caused us to be removed speedily from Griggs', under the plea that his daughter was a dangerous inmate of a tutor's house, and that he might take a fancy to make her run away with one of *us*. Nokes even said that the old gentleman had gone so far as to offer to make it worth his while if he would allow the *enlèvement* to take place—but the Reverend Frederic Griggs replied triumphantly to these calumnies, by marrying his daughter to the Reverend Samuel Butts (who got his living by the death of the apoplectic incumbent), and she is the mother of many children by him, and looks at that angel face of his with a fond smile, and asks, 'Who but you, love, could ever have touched the heart of Eliza?'

## AN INTERESTING EVENT.

BY MR. TITMARSH.

SITTING the other day alone at dinner at the Club, and at the next table to Smith, who was in conversation with his friend Jones, I could not but overhear their colloquy, or rather, Mr. Smith's communication to his friend. As, after all, it betrays no secrets of private life; as his adventure, such as it is, may happen to any one of us; and as, above all, the story is not in the least moral or instructive, I took the liberty of writing it down, as follows:—

'I could not go to that dinner at the Topham Sawyers,' Smith remarked, 'where you met the Duke, and where Beaumaris sat next to Miss Henrica Hays (whom I certainly should have manœuvred to hand down to dinner, and of course should have had as good a chance as Bo of proposing for her, of being accepted, and getting a wife notoriously consumptive, and with six thousand a year)—I could not go to the Topham Sawyers', because I had accepted an invitation to dine with my old schoolfellow Budgeon. He lives near Hyde Park Gardens, in the Tyburn quarter. He does not give dinners often, and I make it a point, when I have said I will go to a man—dammy, sir, I make it a point not to throw him over.'

Jones here remarked that the wine was with Smith, which statement the other acknowledged by filling up a bumper, and then resumed:—

'I knew that the Budgeons had asked a large party, and indeed, all their crack people; for I had seen Mrs. Budgeon in the Park the day before, driving by the Serpentine in her open carriage, and looking uncommonly interesting. She had her best folks—she mentioned them,—nor did I forget to let her know that I was myself invited to the Topham Sawyers' on the same day,—for there is no use in making yourself too cheap; and if you *do* move about in a decent circle, Jones my boy, I advise you to let your friends know it.'

Jones observed that he thought the claret was corked, and the filberts were fine. Smith continued :—

‘I do not always array myself in a white neckcloth and waistcoat to go to dinner, Jones ; but I think it is right on grand days to do so—I think it’s right. Well, sir, I put myself into my very best fig, embroidered shirt, white waistcoat, turquoise buttons, white stockings, and that sort of thing, and set out for Budgeon’s at a quarter to eight. I dressed here at the Club. My fool of a servant had not brought me any white gloves, though ; so I was obliged to buy a pair for three and sixpence, as we drove by Houbigant’s.

‘I recollect it was the thirty-first of June, and as a matter of course it was pouring with rain. By the way, do you *bake* your white neckcloths in damp weather, Jones ? It’s the only way to keep ’em right.’

Jones said he thought this was a better bottle than the last.

‘I drove up, sir, to Budgeon’s door at Hyde Park Gardens, and of course had a row with the scoundrelly cabman about his fare. I gave him eighteenpence ; he said a gentleman would have given him half-a-crown. “Confound your impudence, sir !” said I. “Vell,” said the impudent brute, “vell, I never said you vos one.” And at this moment Budgeon’s door was opened by Cobb, his butler. Cobb was still in pepper-and-salt trousers, which surprised me. He looked rather dubiously at me in the cab.

“Am I late ?” says I.

“No, sir ; only—you haven’t got your note ? But my master will see *you*, sir. You stop here, cab.”

‘And quitting the vehicle, of which the discontented rascal of a driver still persisted in saying, that “a gentleman would gimmy ’alf-a-crownd,” I entered Mr. Budgeon’s house, splashing my white stockings in the mud as I went in, to the accompaniment of a hee-haw from the brute on the cab-box. The familiarity of the people, sir, is disgusting.

‘I was troubled as I entered. The two *battans* of the hall-door were not cast open ; the fellows in black were not there to bawl out your name up the stairs ; there was only Cobb, in a dirty Marsella waistcoat, jingling his watch-chain.

“Good heavens, Cobb !” says I—for I was devilish hungry—“what has happened ?” And I began to think (for I have heard Budgeon is rather shaky) that there was an execution in the house.

“Missis, sir—little girl, sir—about three o’clock, sir—master will see you.—Mr. Smith, sir.” And with these words Cobb ushered me into the dining-room, where Budgeon sat alone.

‘There was not the least preparation for a grand dinner, as you may suppose. It is true that a soiled and crumpled bit of old tablecloth was spread at one corner of the table, with *one* knife and fork laid; but the main portion of the mahogany was only covered with its usual green baize; and Budgeon sat at a farther end in his dressing-gown, and writing letter after letter. They are a very numerous family. She was a Miss Walkinghame,—one of the Wiltshire Walkinghames. You know her name is Fanny Decima, and I don’t know how far the teens in the family went. Budgeon has five sisters himself, and he was firing off notes to all these amiable relatives when I came in. They were all, as you may suppose, pretty much to the same effect:—

“MY DEAR MARIA (or Eliza, or Louisa, according to circumstances)—‘I write a hasty line to say that our dear Fanny has just made me a present of a fifth little girl. Dr. Bloxam is with her, and I have the happiness to say that they are both doing perfectly well. With best regards to Hickson (or Thompson, or Jackson, as the case and the brother-in-law may be),

“I am, my dear, etc., affectionately yours,

“LEONARD BUDGEON.”

‘Twenty-three of these letters to relatives, besides thirty-eight to put off the dinner and evening party, Budgeon had written; and he bragged about it as if he had done a great feat. For my part, I thought, with rage, that the Topham Sawyers’ dinner was coming off at that minute, and that I might have been present but for this disagreeable *contretemps*.

“You’re come in time to wish me joy!” says Budgeon, looking up from his *paperasses* in a piteous tone and manner.

“Joy, indeed,” says I. In fact, I wished him at Bath.

“I’m so accustomed to this sort of thing,” said he, “that I’m no longer excited by it at all. You’ll stay and dine with me, now you’ve come.”

‘I looked daggers at him! “I might have dined at the Topham Sawyers,” I said, “but for this sudden arrival.”

“What is there for dinner, Cobb? You’ll lay a cover for Mr. Smith.”

‘Cobb looked grave. “The cook is gone to fetch Mrs. Walkinghame. I’ve kep’ the cab, to go to Queen Charlotte’s Hospital for—for the nuss. Buttons is gone out with the notes, sir. The young ladies’ maid has took them to their haunt

Codger's ; the other female servants is busy upstairs with missis, sir."

"Do you mean there's no dinner?" cries Budgeon, looking as if he was relieved, though. "Well, I have written the notes. Bloxam says my wife is on no account to be disturbed: and I tell you what, Smith, you shall give me a dinner at the Club."

"Very good," I growled out; although it is deuced hard to be obliged to give a dinner when you have actually refused the Topham Sawyers.

And Cobb, going up to his master's dressing-room, returned thence with the coat, hat, and umbrella with which that gentleman usually walks abroad.

"Come along," said I, with the best grace; and we were both going out accordingly, when suddenly the door opened, and Mrs. Wake, Mrs. Budgeon's maid, who has been with her ever since she was born, made her appearance.

'A man who has in his house a lady's-maid who has been with his wife ever since she was born, has probably two tyrants, certainly one, over him. I would not take a girl with ten thousand a year and a maid who has been with her from the nursery. If your wife is not jealous of you, that woman is. If your wife does not know when you slip in from the Club after midnight, that woman is awake, depend upon it, and hears you go upstairs. If, under pretence of a long debate in the House of Commons, you happen to go to Greenwich with a bachelor party, that woman finds the Trafalgar bill in your pocket, and somehow hears of your *escapade*. You fancy yourself very independent, and unobserved, and that you carry on, you rogue! quite snugly and quietly through life. Fool! you are environed by spies, and circumvented by occult tyrants. Your friends' servants and your own know all that you do. Your wife's maid has intelligences with all the confidential females and males of your circle. You are pursued by detectives in plain (some in second-hand) clothes, and your secrets are as open to them as the area-gate by which they enter your house. Budgeon's eyes quailed before that severe light blue one which hawk-beaked Mrs. Wake fixed upon him.

"You're not a-going out, sir?" said that woman, in a cracked voice.

"Why, Wake, I was going to—to dine at the Club with Mr. Smith; that's all,—with Mr. Smith, you know;" and so, of course, I was dragged in.

"I'll tell my missis, sir, that Mr. Smith wished to take you away, though I'm sure he didn't know her situation, and a blessed baby born only five hours, and the medical man in the house."



“Hang it!” says I, “I never asked—I—that is——”

“O! I dessay, sir, it was master as ast hisself,” Mrs. Wake answered. “And my poor missis upstairs, and I’ve been with her ever since she was born, and took her from the month,—that I did, and I won’t desert her now. But I won’t answer for her life, nor Doctor Bloxam won’t, if master should go out now, as you are a-goin’ to, sir.”

“Good heavens, Wake! why shouldn’t I? There’s no dinner for me. You turned me out of Mrs. Budgeon’s room when I went upstairs, and ordered me not to come up again.”

“She’s not to be disturbed, on no account, sir. The dear suffering thing,” Mrs. Wake said. “Her *mar* is coming, and will soon be year, that’s one comfort, and will keep you company.”

“Oh yes, Mrs. Walkinghame,” Budgeon ruefully said. “Where is she to sleep, Wake?”

“In the best bedroom, sir; in course, in the yellow room, sir,” Wake answered.

“And—and where am I to go?” asked the gentleman.

“Your things is halready brought down into the study, and you’re to sleep on the sofy and harm-chair, of course, sir,” the other said.

‘Budgeon, now, is a very stout, bulky little man, the “sofy” is only a rout-seat, and the arm-chair is what you call a Glastonbury—an oak-chair ornamented with middle-age gim-cracks, and about as easy as Edward the Confessor’s fauteuil in Westminster Abbey. I pictured the wretch to myself, stretched out on a couch which a fakeer or a hermit would find hard to lie on.

“Oh, thank you!” was all the cowed slave could say; and I saw at once, from his behaviour to that supercilious female, and the bewildered obedience which he appeared to bestow on her, that there was some secret between them which rendered the domestic the mistress of her employer. I wonder what it could have been, Jones. She had read private letters out of his waist-coat pocket, very likely. At any rate, my dear fellow, when you marry, take care to have no secrets, or of submitting to an inquisitor over you in the shape of a lady’s-maid.’

Jones (who, by the way, is not, I should say, a man of much conversational power) just thanked Smith to pass the bottle; and the latter resumed his harrowing narrative.

‘As we were conversing in the above manner, there came a banging knock at the door,—one of those coarse, vulgar, furious peals which a cabman, imitating a footman, endeavours to perform. We all started guiltily as we heard it. It was most likely some outlying guest, who, like myself, had not received his note of

excuse, and had come forth to partake of Budgeon's most Barmecidal entertainment.

"And you haven't even a-tied up the knocker!" said Mrs. Wake, with a look of withering scorn. The knocker had slipped his memory, Budgeon owned. At which the maid said, "Of course." Of course she said "Of course."

'Now Mrs. Wake, looking savagely round her and round the room, saw on the table my Gibus' hat, which I had set down there, and in it my brau-new white kid gloves, that I had bought at Houbigant's for three-and-sixpence. A savage satisfaction lighted up her eyes as she viewed them, and diving down into her pocket, and producing thence a piece of string, this fiend in human shape seized hold of my gloves with a sarcastic apology, and said she was sure I would have no objection to her tying up the knocker with them, and preventing her missis from being knocked to death. So she sailed out of the room, with my three-and-sixpence in her hands, and being a tall bony woman, who could reach up to the knockers without difficulty, she had each of them soon muffled up in a beautiful white French kid, No. 8½.

"You see how it is, old boy," Budgeon dismally said. "Fanny doesn't like my leaving the house; and in her delicate condition, of course, we must humour her. I must come and dine with you some other day. We have plenty of time before us, you know. And to-night I must stop and receive my mother-in-law and take a mutton-chop at home."

"Take a mutton-chop at home," indeed! The wretched man little knew what truth he was telling there; for I give you my honour, sir, five minutes afterwards, Mrs. Wake, having finished tying up the door with my gloves, and all the other servants of the house being absent upon various errands connected with the interesting occasion, she reappeared amongst us, holding an uncovered dish, on which there were two cold mutton-chops left from the children's dinner! And I left the unhappy man to eat these, and went away to devour my own chagrin.

'It was pouring with rain, sir, as I went down the street. There are no cabs within a mile of Hyde Park Gardens; and I was soon wet through, and my shirt-front and cravat all rumpled with rain; otherwise, I might have gone into a tavern and dined, and slipped into the Topham Sawyers' in the evening. But I was too great a figure for that; and I was forced, positively, to come back to this Club, to take my morning clothes out of the bag and reassume them, and to dine here at my own charge, after having refused one of the best dinners in London.'

‘Is that all, old boy?’ Jones asked.

‘All! no, it isn’t all!’ said Smith, with a horrid shriek of laughter. ‘Look here, sir,’ and he pulled out a note, which he read, and which was to the following effect:—

“DEAR SMITH—You were the first person in the house after an interesting event occurred there, and Fanny and I have agreed that you must be godfather to our little stranger. Both are doing very well, and your little god-daughter elect is pronounced by the authorities to be the prettiest and largest child ever seen of her age.

“Mrs. Walkinghame is still with us, and Wake allows me to go out sometimes. When will you give me the dinner you promised me at the Megatherium? We might go to Vauxhall afterwards, where Van Ambrugh, I am told, is very interesting and worth seeing.

“Yours ever, dear Smith,

“LEONARD BUDGEON.”

‘There, sir,’ cried Smith, ‘isn’t that enough to try any man’s patience? Just tot up what that “interesting event” has cost me—not the dinner to Budgeon, who is a good fellow, and I don’t grudge it to him—but the rest. Cabs, four shillings; gloves, three-and-six; Henrica Hays, whom I might have had with two hundred thousand pounds; and add to this a silver mug or a papboat, which will cost me four or five pound, and a couple of guineas to that vixen of a Mrs. Wake;—and all coming from an interesting event.’

‘Suppose we have coffee?’ Jones remarked. And as I could not listen decently any more to their conversation, I laid down the newspaper and walked away.

## VOLTIGEUR.

THERE arose out of the last Epsom races a little family perplexity, whereon the owner of Voltigeur little speculated: and as out of this apparently trivial circumstance a profound and useful moral may be drawn, to be applied by the polite reader; and as Epsom races will infallibly happen next year, and I daresay for many succeeding generations; perhaps the moral which this brief story points had better be printed upon Dorling's next 'Correct Card,' as a warning to future patrons and patronesses of the turf.

The moral, then,—the text of my sermon is, NEVER.—But we will keep the moral, if you please, for the end of the fable.

It happened, then, that among the parties who were collected on the hill to see the race, the carriage of a gentleman, whom we shall call Sir Joseph Raikes, occupied a commanding position and attracted a great deal of attention amongst the gentlemen sportsmen. Those bucks upon the ground who were not acquainted with the fair occupant of that carriage,—as indeed how should many thousands of them be?—some being shabby bucks; some being vulgar bucks; some being hot and unpleasant bucks, smoking bad cigars, and only staring into Lady Raikes' carriage by that right which allows one Briton to look at another Briton, and a cat to look at a king;—of those bucks, I say, who, not knowing Lady Raikes, yet came and looked at her, there was scarce one that did not admire her, and envy the lucky rogue her husband.

Of those ladies who, in their walks from their own vehicles, passed her ladyship's, there was scarce one lady who did not say:—'Is that all? Is that the beauty you are all talking about so much? She is overrated; she looks stupid; she is over-dressed; she squints;' and so forth; while some of the men who *did* happen to have the honour of an acquaintance with Lady Raikes and her husband (and many a man, who had thought Raikes rather stupid in his bachelor days, was glad enough to know him

now), each as he came to the carriage, and partook of the excellent luncheon provided there, had the most fascinating grins and ogles for the lady, and the most triumphant glances for all the rest of the world,—glances which seemed to say: ‘Look, you rascals, I know Lady Raikes; you don’t know Lady Raikes; I can drink a glass of champagne to Lady Raikes’ health. What would you give, you dog, to have such a sweet smile from Lady Raikes? Did you ever see such eyes? did you ever see such a complexion? did you ever see such a killing pink dress, and such a dear little delightfully carved parasol?’—Raikes had it carved for her last year at Baden, when they were on their wedding trip. It has their coats-of-arms and their ciphers intertwined elegantly round the stalk—a J and a Z; her name is Zuleika; before she married she was Zuleika Trotter. Her elder sister, Medora, married Lord T—mn—ddy; her younger, Haidee, is engaged to the eldest son of the second son of a noble D—ke. The Trotters are of a good family. Dolly Trotter, Zuleika’s brother, was in the same regiment (and that, I need not say, an extremely heavy one) with Sir Joseph Raikes.

He did not call himself Joseph then: quite the contrary, Larkyn Raikes, before his marriage, was one of the wildest and most irregular of our British youth. Let us not allude—he would blush to hear them—to the particulars of his past career. He turned away his servant for screwing up one of the knockers which he had removed, during the period of his own bachelorhood, from an eminent physician’s house in Savile Row, on the housekeeper’s door in Larkyn Hall. There are whole hampers of those knockers stowed away somewhere, and snuff-taking Highlanders, and tin hats, and black boys,—the trophies of his youth, which Raikes would like to send back to their owners, did he know them; and when he carried off these spoils of war he was not always likely to know.

When he goes to the Bayonet and Anchor Club now (and he dined there twice during Lady Raikes’——, in fine, when there was no dinner at home) the butler brings him a half-pint of sherry and a large bottle of Seltzer water, and looks at him with a sigh and wonders—‘Is this Captain Raikes, as used to breakfast off pale ale at three, to take his regular two bottles at dinner, and to drink brandy and water in the smoking billiard-room all night till all was blue?’ Yes, it is the same Raikes; Larkyn no more,—riotous no more—brandivorous no longer. He gave away all his cigars at his marriage; quite unlike Screwby, who also married the other day, and offered to *sell* me some. He has not betted at a race since his father paid his debts and forgave him, just



before the old gentleman died and Raikes came into his kingdom. Upon that accession, Zuleika Trotter, who looked rather sweetly upon Bob Vincent before, was so much touched by Sir Joseph Raikes' determination to reform, that she dismissed Bob and became Lady Raikes.

Dolly Trotter still remains in the Paddington Dragoons ; Dolly is still unmarried ; Dolly smokes still ; Dolly owes money still. And though his venerable father, Rear-Admiral Sir Ajax Trotter, K.C.B., has paid his debts many times, and swears if he ever hears of Dolly betting again he will disinherit his son, Dolly—the undutiful Dolly—goes on betting still.

Lady Raikes, then, beamed in the pride of her beauty upon Epsom race-course, dispensed smiles and luncheon to a host of acquaintances, and accepted in return all the homage and compliments which the young men paid her. The hearty and jovial Sir Joseph Raikes was not the least jealous of the admiration which his pretty wife caused ; not even of Bob Vincent, whom he rather pitied for his mishap, poor fellow ! (to be sure, Zuleika spoke of Vincent very scornfully, and treated his pretensions as absurd) ; and with whom, meeting him on the course, Raikes shook hands very cordially, and insisted upon bringing him up to Lady Raikes' carriage, to partake of refreshment there.

There *could* have been no foundation for the wicked rumour that Zuleika had looked sweetly upon Vincent before Raikes carried her off. Lady Raikes received Mr. Vincent with the kindest and frankest smile ; shook hands with him with perfect politeness and indifference, and laughed and talked so easily with him that it was impossible there could have been any previous discomfort between them.

Not very far off from Lady Raikes' carriage, on the hill, there stood a little black brougham—the quietest and most modest equipage in the world, and in which nevertheless there must have been something very attractive, for the young men crowded round this carriage in numbers ; and especially that young reprobate Dolly Trotter was to be seen, constantly leaning his great elbows on the window, and poking his head into the carriage. Lady Raikes remarked that, among other gentlemen, her husband went up and spoke to the little carriage, and when he and Dolly came back to her, asked who was in the black brougham.

For some time Raikes couldn't understand which was the brougham she meant—there were so many broughams. 'The black one with the red blinds, was it? Oh, that—that was a very old friend—yes, old Lord Cripplegate was in the brougham : he had the gout, and he couldn't walk.'

As Raikes made this statement he blushed as red as a geranium ; he looked at Dolly Trotter in an imploring manner, who looked at him, and who presently went away from his sister's carriage bursting with laughter.

After making the above statement to his wife, Raikes was particularly polite and attentive to her, and did not leave her side ; nor would he consent to her leaving the carriage. There were all sorts of vulgar people about ; she would be jostled in the crowd ; she could not bear the smell of the cigars—she knew she couldn't (this made Lady Raikes wince a little) ; the sticks might knock her darling head off ; and so forth.

Raikes is a very accomplished and athletic man, and, as a bachelor, justly prided himself upon shying at the sticks better than any man in the army. Perhaps, as he passed the persons engaged in that fascinating sport, he would have himself liked to join in it ; but he declined his favourite entertainment, and came back faithfully to the side of his wife.

As Vincent talked at Lady Raikes' side, he alluded to this accomplishment of her husband.

'Your husband has not many accomplishments,' Vincent said (he is a man of rather a sardonic humour) ; 'but in shying at the sticks he is quite unequalled : he has quite a genius for it. He ought to have the sticks painted on his carriage, as the French marshals have their batons. Hasn't he brought you a pincushion or a jack-in-the-box, Lady Raikes ? and has he begun to neglect you so soon ? Every father with a little boy at home' (and he congratulated her ladyship on the birth of that son and heir) 'ought surely to think of him, and bring him a soldier, or a monkey, or a toy or two.'

'Oh yes,' cried Lady Raikes, 'her husband must go. He must go and bring back a soldier, or a monkey, or a dear little jack-in-the-box, for dear little Dolly at home.'

So away went Raikes ; indeed, nothing loth. He warmed with the noble sport : he was one of the finest players in England. He went on playing for a delightful half-hour (how swiftly, in the blessed amusement, it passed away !) ; he reduced several of the sticksters to bankruptcy, by his baculine skill ; he returned to the carriage laden with jacks, wooden apples, and soldiers, enough to amuse all the nurseries in Pimlico.

During his absence Lady Raikes, in the most winning manner, had asked Mr. Vincent for his arm, for a little walk ; and did not notice the sneer with which he said that his arm had always been at her service. She was not jostled by the crowd inconveniently ; she was not offended by the people smoking (though

Raikes was forbidden that amusement); and she walked upon Mr. Vincent's arm, and somehow found herself close to the little black brougham, in which sat gouty old Lord Cripplegate.

Gouty old Lord Cripplegate wore a light blue silk dress, a lace mantle and other gimcracks, a white bonnet with roses, and ringlets as long as a chancellor's wig, but of the most beautiful black hue. His lordship had a pair of enormous eyes, that languished in the most killing manner; and cheeks that were decorated with delicate dimples; and lips of the colour of the rightest sealing-wax.

'Who's that?' asked Lady Raikes.

'That,' said Mr. Vincent, 'is Mrs. Somerset Montmorency.'

'Who's Mrs. Somerset Montmorency?' hissed out Zuleika.

'It is possible you have not met her in society. Mrs. Somerset Montmorency doesn't go much into society,' Mr. Vincent said.

'Why did he say it was Lord Cripplegate?' cried the lady.

Vincent, like a fiend in human shape, burst out laughing. 'Did Raikes say it was Lord Cripplegate? Well, he ought to know.'

'What ought he to know?' asked Zuleika.

'Excuse me, Lady Raikes,' said the other, with his constant sneer, 'there are things which people had best not know. There are things which people had best forget, as your ladyship very well knows. You forget; why shouldn't Raikes forget? Let bygones be bygones. Let's all forget, Zulei—— I beg your pardon. Here comes Raikes. How hot he looks! He has got a hat full of jack-in-the-boxes. How obedient he has been! He will not set the Thames on fire,—but he's a good fellow. Yes; we'll forget all: won't we?' And the fiend pulled the tuft under his chin, and gave a diabolical grin with his fallow face.

Zuleika did not say one word about Lord Cripplegate when Raikes found her and flung his treasures into her lap. She did not show her anger in words, but in an ominous boding silence; during which her eyes might be seen moving pretty constantly to the little black brougham.

When the Derby was run, and Voltigeur was announced as the winner, Sir Joseph, who saw the race from the box of his carriage having his arm round her ladyship, who stood on the back seat, and thought all men the greatest hypocrites in creation (and so a man is the greatest hypocrite of all animals, save one)—Raikes jumped up and gave a 'Hurrah!' which he suddenly checked when his wife asked, with a death-like calmness, 'And

pray, sir, have you been betting on the race, that you are so excited?’

‘Oh no, my love, of course not. But, you know, it’s a Yorkshire horse, and I—I’m glad it wins; that’s all,’ Raikes said; in which statement there was not, I am sorry to say, a word of truth.

Raikes wasn’t a betting man any more. He had forsworn it. He would never bet again. But he had just, in the course of the day, taken the odds in *one* little bet; and he had just happened to win. When his wife charged him with the crime, he was about to avow it. ‘But no,’ he thought; ‘it will be a surprise for her. I will buy her the necklace she scolded me about at Lacy and Gimerack’s: it’s just the sum. She has been sulky all day. It’s about that she is sulky now—I’ll go and have another shy at the sticks.’ And he went away, delighting himself with this notion, and with the idea that he could at last satisfy his adorable little Zuleika.

As Raikes passed Mrs. Somerset Montmorency’s brougham, Zuleika remarked how that lady beckoned to him, and how Raikes went up to her. Though he did not remain by the carriage two minutes, Zuleika was ready to take an affidavit that he was there for half-an-hour; and was saluted by a satanical grin from Vincent, who by this time had returned to her carriage-side, and was humming a French tune, which says that ‘*on revient toujours à ses premi-ères amours, à se-es premières amours.*’

‘What is that you are singing? How dare you sing that!’ cried Lady Raikes, with tears in her eyes.

‘It’s an old song—you used to sing it,’ said Mr. Vincent. ‘By the way, I congratulate you. Your husband has won six hundred pounds. I heard Betterton say so, who gave him the odds.’

‘He is a wretch! He gave me his word of honour that he didn’t bet. He is a gambler—he’ll ruin his child! He neglects his wife for that—that creature! He calls her Lord Crick—Crick—ipplegate,’ sobbed her ladyship. ‘Why did I marry him?’

‘Why, indeed!’ said Mr. Vincent.

As the two were talking, Dolly Trotter, her ladyship’s brother, came up to the carriage; at which, with a scowl on his wicked countenance, and indulging inwardly in language which I am very glad not to be called upon to report, Vincent retired, biting his nails, like a traitor, and exhibiting every sign of ill-humour which the villain of a novel or of a play is wont to betray.

‘Don’t have that fellow about you, Zuly,’ Dolly said to his darling sister. ‘He is a bad one. He’s no principle: he—he’s a gambler, and everything that’s bad.’

'I know others who are gamblers,' cried out Zuleika. 'I know others who are everything that's bad, Adolphus,' Lady Raikes exclaimed.

'For Heaven's sake, what do you mean?' said Adolphus, becoming red and looking very much frightened.

'I mean my husband,' gasped the lady. 'I shall go home to papa. I shall take my dear little blessed babe with me and go to papa, Adolphus. And if you had the spirit of a man, you would—you would avenge me, that you would.'

'Against Joe!' said the heavy dragoon; 'against Joe, Zuly? Why, hang me if Joe isn't the gweatest twump in Christendom. By Jove, he is!' said the big one, shaking his fist; 'and if that scoundwel, Vincent, or any other wascal, has said a word against him, by Jove——'

'Pray stop those horrid oaths and vulgar threats, Adolphus,' her ladyship said.

'I don't know what it is,—you've got something against Joe. Something has put you against him; and if it's Vincent, I'll wring his——'

'Mercy! mercy! Pray cease this language,' Lady Raikes said.

'You don't know what a good fellow Joe is,' said the dragoon. 'The best twump in England, as *I've* weason to say, sister; and here he comes with the horses. God bless the old boy!'

With this, honest Sir Joseph Raikes took his seat in his carriage; and tried by artless blandishments, by humility, and by simple conversation, to coax his wife into good-humour: but all his efforts were unavailing.

She would not speak a word during the journey to London; and when she reached home, rushed up to the nursery and instantly burst into tears upon the sleeping little Adolphus' pink and lace cradle.

'It's all about that necklace, Mrs. Prince,' the good-natured Baronet explained to the nurse of the son and heir. 'I know it's about the necklace. She rowed me about it all the way down to Epsom; and I can't give her it now, that's flat. I've *no* money. I won't go tick, that's flat; and she ought to be content with what she has had; oughtn't she now, Prince?'

'Indeed she ought, Sir Joseph; and you're an angel of a man, Sir Joseph; and so I often tell my lady, Sir Joseph,' the nurse said: 'and the more you will spile her, the more she will take on, Sir Joseph.'

But if Lady Raikes was angry at not having the necklace, what must have been her ladyship's feelings when she saw, in the box opposite to her at the opera, Mrs. Somerset Montmorency, with



that very necklace on her shoulders for which she had pined in vain! How she got it? Who gave it her? How she came by the money to buy such a trinket? How she dared to drive about at all in the Park, the audacious wretch! All these were questions which the infuriate Zuleika put to herself, her confidential maid, her child's nurse, and two or three of her particular friends; and of course she determined that there was but one clue to the mystery of the necklace, which was that her husband had purchased it with the six hundred pounds which he had won at the Derby, which he had denied having won even to her, which he had spent in this shameful manner. Nothing would suit her but a return home to her papa—nothing would satisfy her but a separation from the criminal who had betrayed her. She wept floods of tears over her neglected boy, and repeatedly asked that as yet speechless innocent, whether he would remember his mother when her place was filled by another, and whether her little Adolphus would take care that no insult was offered to her untimely grave?

The row at home at length grew so unbearable that Sir Joseph Raikes, who had never had an explanation since his marriage, and had given in to all his wife's caprices,—that Sir Joseph, we say, even with his 'eavenly temper, he broke out into a passion; and one day after dinner, at which only his brother-in-law Dolly was present, told his wife that her tyranny was intolerable, and that it must come to an end.

Dolly said he was 'quite wight,' and backed up Raikes in every way.

Zuleika said they were a pair of brutes, and that she desired to return to Sir Ajax.

'Why, what the devil is urging you?' cried the husband; 'you drive me mad, Zuleika.'

'Yes, what are you at, Zuleika? You dwive him cwazy,' said her brother.

Upon which Zuleika broke out.

She briefly stated that her husband was a liar; that he was a gambler; that he had deceived her about betting at Epsom, and had given his word to a lie; that he had deceived her about that—that woman,—and had given his word to another lie; and that, with the fruit of his gambling transactions at Epsom, he had purchased the diamond necklace, not for her, but for that—that person! That was all—that was enough. Let her go home and die in Baker Street, in the room, she prayed Heaven, she never had quitted! That was her charge. If Sir Joseph Raikes had anything to say he had better say it.

Sir Joseph Raikes said that she had the most confounded jealous temper that ever a woman was cursed with ; that he had been on his knees to her ever since his marriage, and had spent half his income in administering to her caprices and extravagances ; that as for these charges they were so monstrous he should not condescend to answer them ; and as she chose to leave her husband and her child, she might go whenever she liked.

Lady Raikes upon this rang the bell, and requested Hickson the butler to tell Dickson her maid to bring down her bonnet and shawl ; and when Hickson quitted the dining-room Dolly Trotter began,—

‘Zuleika,’ said he, ‘you are enough to twy the patience of an angel ; and, by Jove, you do ! You’ve got the best fellow for a husband’ (a sneer from Zuleika) ‘that ever was bullied by a woman, and you tweek him like a dawg. When you were ill, you used to make him get up of a night to go to the doctor’s. When you’re well, you plague his life out of him. He pays your milliner’s bills as if you were a duchess, and you have but to ask for a thing and you get it.’

‘Oh yes ; I have necklaces !’ said Zuleika.

‘Confound you, Zuly ! hadn’t he paid three hundred and eighty for a new cawwiage for you the week before ? Hadn’t he fitted your drawing-room with yellow satin at the beginning of the season ? Hadn’t he bought you the pair of ponies you wanted, and gone without a hack himself, and he getting as fat as a porpoise for want of exercise, the poor old boy ? And for that necklace, do you know how it was that you didn’t have it, and that you were very nearly having it, you ungrateful little devil you ? It was *I* prevented you ! He *did* win six hundred at the Derby : and he would have bought your necklace, but he gave me the money. The governor said he never would pay another play-debt again for me ; and bet I would, like a confounded, gweat, stooped fool ; and it was this old Joe—this dear old twump—who booked up for me, and took me out of the hole, like the best fellow in the whole world, by Jove ! And I’ll never bet again, so help me—— ! And that’s why he couldn’t tell—and that’s why he wouldn’t split on me—and that’s why you didn’t have your confounded necklace, which old Cwipplegate bought for Mrs. Montmowency, who’s going to marry her, like a confounded fool for his pains !’

And here the dragoon, being blown, took a large glass of claret ; and when Hickson and Dickson came downstairs, they found her ladyship in rather a theatrical attitude, on her knees, embracing her husband’s big hand, and calling down blessings

upon him, and owning that she was a wretch, and a monster, and a fiend.

She was only a jealous, little spoiled fool of a woman ; and I am sure those who read her history have never met with her like, or have ever plagued their husbands. Certainly they have not, if they are not married : as, let us hope, they will be.

As for Vincent, he persists in saying that the defence is a fib from beginning to end, and that the Trotters were agreed to deceive Lady Raikes. But who hasn't had his best actions misinterpreted by calumny ? And what innocence or good-will can disarm jealousy ?

## A LEAF OUT OF A SKETCH-BOOK.

If you will take a leaf out of my sketch-book, you are welcome. It is only a scrap, but I have nothing better to give. When the fishing-boats come in at a watering-place, haven't you remarked that though these may be choking with great fish, you can only get a few herrings or a whiting or two? The big fish are all bespoken in London. As it is with fish, so it is with authors, let us hope. Some Mr. Charles, of Paternoster Row, some Mr. Groves, of Cornhill (or elsewhere), has agreed for your turbot and your salmon, your soles and your lobsters. Take one of my little fish—any leaf you like out of the little book—a battered little book: through what a number of countries, to be sure, it has travelled in this pocket!

The sketches are but poor performances, say you? I don't say no; and value them no higher than you do, except as recollections of the past. The little scrawl helps to fetch back the scene which was present and alive once, and is gone away now, and dead. The past resurges out of its grave: comes up—a sad-eyed ghost sometimes—and gives a wan ghost-like look of recognition, ere it pops down under cover again. Here's the Thames, an old graveyard, an old church, and some old chestnuts standing behind it. Ah! it was a very cheery place that old graveyard; but what a dismal, cut-throat, crack-windowed, disreputable residence was that 'charming villa on the banks of the Thames,' which led me on the day's excursion! Why, the 'capacious stabling' was a ruinous wooden old barn, the garden was a mangy potato patch, overlooked by the territories of a neighbouring washerwoman. The housekeeper owned that the water was constantly in the cellars and ground-floor rooms in winter. Had I gone to live in that place, I should have perished like a flower in spring, or a young gazelle, let us say, with dark blue eyes. I had spent a day and hired a fly at ever so much charges, misled by an unvarnished auctioneer, against whom I have no remedy for publishing that abominable work of fiction which led me to make a journey, lose a day, and waste a guinea.

What is the next picture in the little show-book? It is a scene at Calais. The sketch is entitled 'The Little Merchant.' He was a dear, pretty little rosy-cheeked merchant four years old maybe. He had a little scarlet *képi*; a little military frock-coat; a little pair of military red trousers and boots, which did not near touch the ground from the chair on which he sat sentinel. He was a little crockery merchant, and the wares over which he was keeping guard, sitting surrounded by walls and piles of them as in a little castle, were . . . well, I never saw such a queer little crockery merchant.

Him and his little chair, boots, *képi*, crockery, you can see in the sketch—but I see, nay hear, a great deal more. At the end of the quiet little old, old street, which has retired out of the world's business as it were, being quite too aged, feeble, and musty to take any part in life—there is a great braying and bellowing of serpents and bassoons, a nasal chant of clerical voices, and a pattering of multitudinous feet. We run towards the market. It is a church *fête* day. Banners painted and gilt with images of saints are flaming in the sun. Candles are held aloft, feebly twinkling in the noontide shine. A great procession of children with white veils, white shoes, white roses, passes, and the whole town is standing with its hat off to see the religious show. When I look at my little merchant, then, I not only see him, but that procession passing over the place; and as I see those people in their surplices, I can almost see Eustache de St. Pierre and his comrades walking in their shirts to present themselves to Edward and Philippa of blessed memory. And they stand before the wrathful monarch—poor fellows, meekly shuddering in their chemises, with ropes round their necks; and good Philippa kneels before the royal conqueror, and says, 'My King, my Edward, my *beau Sire*! give these citizens their lives for our Lady's gramercy and the sake of thy Philippa!' And the Plantagenet growls, and scowls, and softens, and he lets these burgesses go. This novel and remarkable historical incident passes through my mind as I see the clergymen and clergy-boys pass in their little short white surplices on a mid-August day. The balconies are full, the bells are all in a jingle, and the blue noonday sky quivers overhead.

I suppose other pen and pencil sketches have the same feeling. The sketch brings back, not only the scene, but the circumstances under which the scene was viewed. In taking up an old book, for instance, written in former days by your humble servant, he comes upon passages which are outwardly lively and facetious, but inspire their writer with the most dismal melancholy. I lose all cognizance



of the text sometimes, which is hustled and elbowed out of sight by the crowd of thoughts which throng forward, and which were alive and active at the time that text was born. Ah, my good sir! a man's books mayn't be interesting (and I could mention other author's works besides this one's which set me to sleep), but if you knew *all* a writer's thoughts, how interesting his book would be! Why, a grocer's day-book might be a wonderful history, if alongside of the entries of cheese, pickles, and figs, you could read the circumstances of the writer's life, and the griefs, hopes, joys, which caused the heart to beat, while the hand was writing and the ink flowing fresh. Ah memory! ah the past, ah the sad, sad past! Look under this waistcoat, my dear madam. There. Over the liver. Don't be frightened. You can't see it. But there, at this moment, I assure you, there is an enormous outline gnawing, gnawing.

Turn over the page. You can't deny that this is a nice little sketch of a quaint old town, with city towers, and an embattled town gate, with a hundred peaked gables, and rickety balconies and gardens sweeping down to the river-wall with its toppling ancient summer-houses under which the river rushes; the rushing river, the talking river, that murmurs all day, and brawls all night over the stones. At early morning and evening under this terrace which you see in the sketch—it is the terrace of the Steinbock or Capricorn Hotel—the cows come; and there, under the walnut-trees before the tannery, is a fountain and pump where the maids come in the afternoon and for some hours make a clatter as noisy as the river. Mountains gird it around, clad in dark green firs, with purple shadows gushing over their sides, and glorious changes and gradations of sunrise and setting. A more picturesque, quaint, kind, quiet little town than this of Coire in the Grisons, I have seldom seen; or a more comfortable little inn than this of the Steinbock or Capricorn, on the terrace of which we are standing. But quick, let us turn the page. To look at it makes one horribly melancholy. As we are on the inn-terrace one of our party lies ill in the hotel within. When will that doctor come? Can we trust to a Swiss doctor in a remote little town away at the confines of the railway world? He is a good, sensible, complacent doctor, *laus Deo*; the people of the hotel as kind, as attentive, as gentle, as eager to oblige. But oh, the gloom of those sunshiny days; the sickening languor and doubt which fill the heart as the hand is making yonder sketch, and I think of the invalid suffering within!

Quick, turn the page. And what is here? This picture, ladies and gentlemen, represents a steamer on the Alabama river, plying

(or which plied) between Montgomery and Mobile. See, there is a black nurse with a cotton handkerchief round her head, dangling and tossing a white baby. Look in at the open door of that cabin, or 'state room' as they call the crib yonder. A mother is leaning by a bed-place; and see, kicking up in the air, are a little pair of white fat legs, over which that happy young mother is bending such happy, tender contemplation. That gentleman with a forked beard and a slouched hat, whose legs are sprawling here and there, and who is stabbing his mouth and teeth with his penknife, is quite good-natured, though he looks so fierce. A little time ago I was reading in the cabin, having one book in my hand and another at my elbow; he affably took the book at my elbow, read in it a little, and put it down by my side again. He meant no harm. I say he is quite good-natured and kind. His manners are not those of Mayfair, but is not Alabama a river as well as Thames? I wish that other little gentleman were in the cabin, who asked me to liquor twice or thrice in the course of the morning, but whose hospitality I declined, preferring not to be made merry by wine or strong waters before dinner. After dinner, in return for his hospitality, I asked *him* if he would drink? 'No, sir, I have dined,' he answered, with very great dignity, and a tone of reproof. Very good. Manners differ. I have not a word to say.

Well, my little Mentor is not in my sketch; but he is in my mind as I look at it: and this sketch, ladies and gentlemen, is especially interesting and valuable, because *the steamer blew up in the very next journey*: blew up, I give you my honour—burst her boilers close by my state-room, so that I might, had I but waited for a week, have witnessed a celebrated institution of the country, and had the full benefit of the boiling.

I turn a page, and who are these little men who appear on it? JIM and SADY are two young friends of mine at Savannah in Georgia. I made Sady's acquaintance on a first visit to America, a pretty little brown boy with beautiful bright eyes—and it appears that I presented him with a quarter of a dollar, which princely gift he remembered years afterwards, for never were eyes more bright and kind than the little man's when he saw me, and I dined with his kind masters on my second visit. Jim at my first visit had been a little toddling tadpole of a creature, but during the interval of the two journeys had developed into the full-blown beauty which you see. On the day after my arrival these young persons paid me a visit, and here is a humble portraiture of them, and an accurate account of a conversation which took place between us, as taken down on the spot by the elder of the interlocutors.

Jim is five years old ; Sady is seven : only Jim is a great deal fatter. Jim and Sady have had sausage and hominy for breakfast. One sausage, Jim's was the biggest. Jim can sing but declines on being pressed, and looks at Sady and grins. They both work in de garden. Jim has been licked by Master, but Sady never. These are their best clothes. They go to church in these clothes. Heard a fine sermon yesterday, but don't know what it was about. Never heard of England : never heard of America. Like oranges



best. Don't know any old woman who sells oranges. (*A pecuniary transaction takes place.*) Will give that quarter dollar to pa. That was pa who waited at dinner. Are hungry, but dinner not cooked yet. Jim all the while is revolving on his axis, and when begged to stand still turns round in a fitful manner.

*Exeunt Jim and Sady with a cake apiece which the housekeeper gives them. Jim tumbles downstairs—in his little red jacket, his little—his little ?—his immense red trousers.*

On my word, the fair proportions of Jim are not exaggerated—such a queer little laughing blackamoorkin I have never seen.

Seen? I see him now, and Sady, and a half-dozen more of the good people, creeping on silent bare feet to the drawing-room door when the music begins, and listening with all their ears, with all



their eyes. Good-night, kind little warm-hearted little Sady and Jim! May peace soon be within your doors, and plenty within your walls! I have had so much kindness there, that I grieve to think of friends in arms, and brothers in anger.

THE END.

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